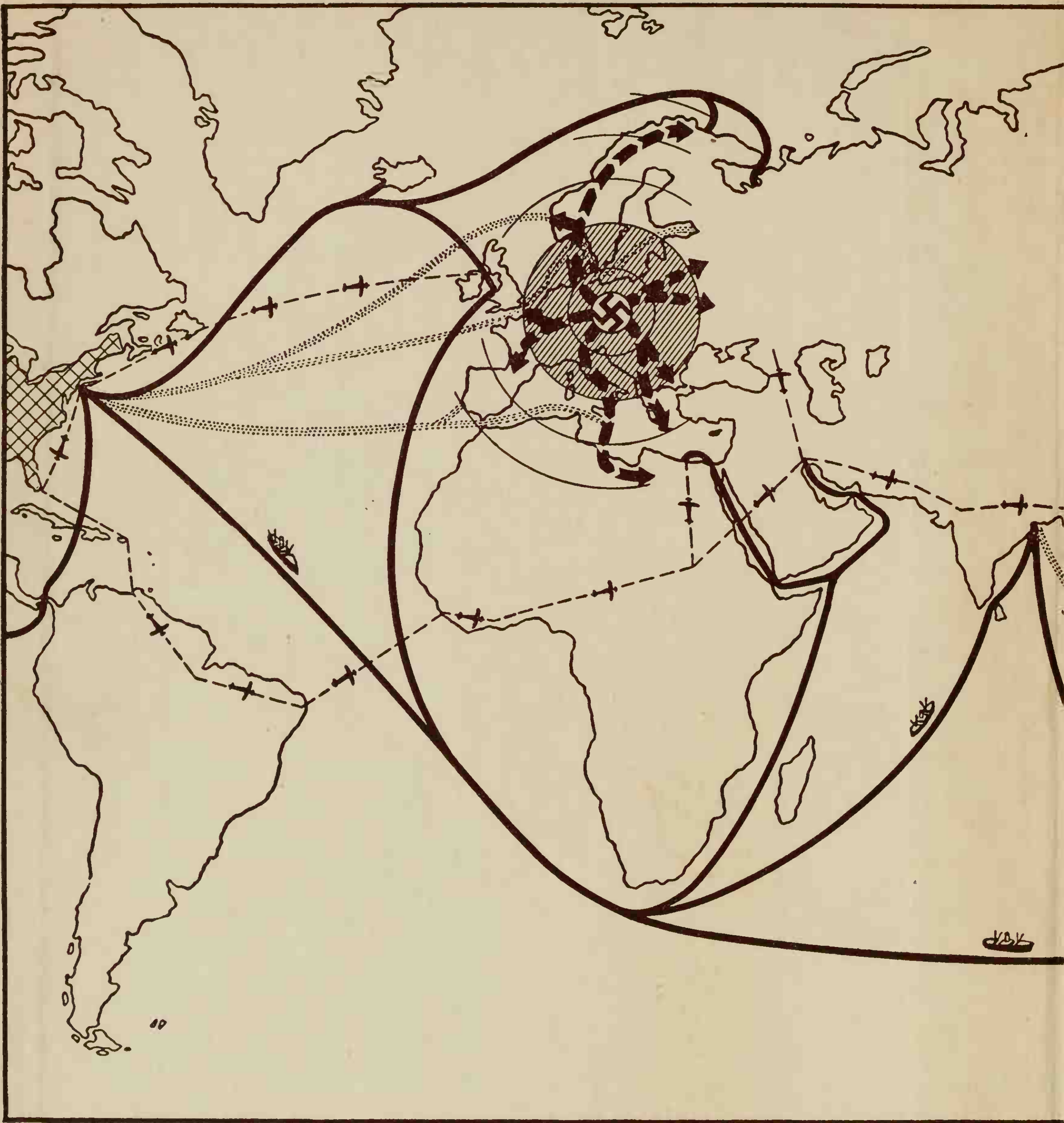
THE
BACKGROUND
OF
OUR WAR



United Nations Vs. Axis:

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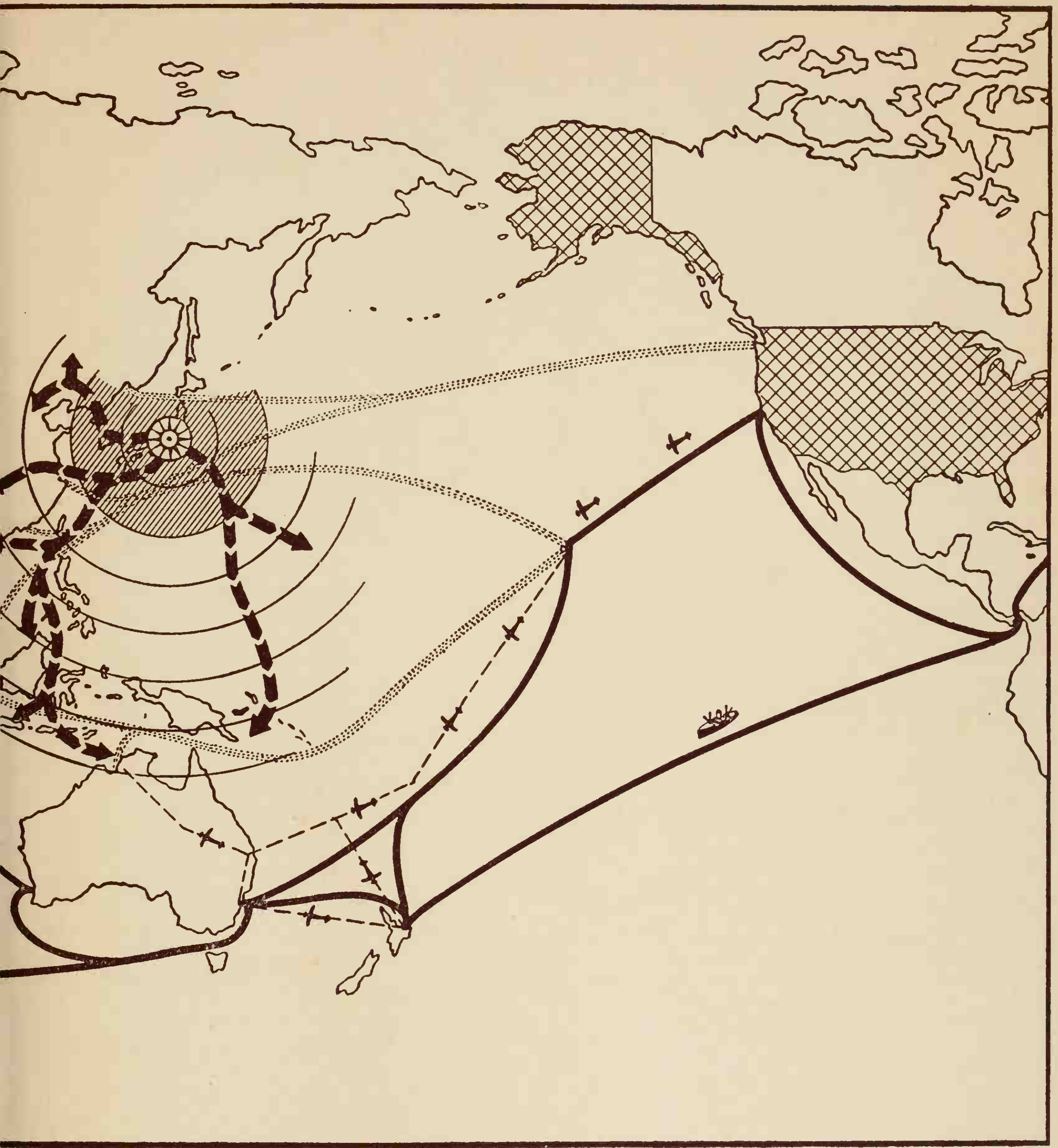

THE WORLD FRONT

THE BACKGROUND OF OUR WAR

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THE BACKGROUND OF OUR WAR

FROM LECTURES
PREPARED BY THE
ORIENTATION COURSE
WAR DEPARTMENT
BUREAU OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

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To All American Citizens
NOW ENGAGED IN TOTAL WAR AT HOME AND ABROAD
THIS VOLUME IS DEDICATED

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FOREWORD

In mid-november of 1941, as America's new army was completing the first year of its training, the War Department Bureau of Public Relations was given a directive, unique in our military history. The men in uniform were to be told the full story of the events which had finally compelled America to rearm and to prepare once more for major war. The Orientation Course shortly became an integral feature of every soldier's basic military training.

As finally executed, the course consisted of four principal features: (1) a series of fifteen military lectures, tracing the developments from Munich and Mukden to those of the present day, these lectures given by selected Army officers; (2) a day-to-day portrayal of current developments, presented by company officers to their commands; (3) a series of lectures on collateral subjects by civilian experts; (4) distribution of selected literature and maps to camp libraries and other places of assembly. The military lectures were to be concluded before the first of April. Other features of the course continue in operation. In order to reach the new millions who are to be inducted into the service, film versions of the military lectures are being prepared. The material contained in these lectures is freely available to the general public in the form of this book.

From first to last one basic principle has guided those who were charged with execution of the directive —namely that propaganda, in the normal acceptance of that term, was neither necessary nor desirable. The pattern of events, fully disclosed, can lead to but one conclusion, one fixed purpose on the part of any loyal American. "Truth ever has most strength of what men say."

Entry of the United States into the war necessitated no change in the program of education. It did, however, answer the oft-repeated earlier queries as to the need of the nation's preparation for war. After December 7 the rubbish of slogans and facile catchwords was replaced by the given necessities of the struggle for survival. It became clear that total war is fought and won by the "nation in arms," with every man, woman, and child serving on the battle line or on the home front. Such a war is lost by nations which are unable to mobilize to the full their resources—human and material. Indeed, for a democratic nation, compelled to convert its entire normal economy to a war production basis, mechanized war in its early stages makes even graver demands on the home front—the men and women fighting the battle of production—than on the armed forces. For until the battle of production has been won, a people can only stand and defend. Attack, the sweeping offensive which alone can bring victory, becomes possible only after the armed forces are fully armed. And if there still are those who see a distinction of combatant status between the armed forces and the home front, the record of Axis strategy and technique should have disabused them. The jungle law of Axis rules of warfare has made the term *noncombatant* obsolete.

The discerning reader will look beyond this war and the victory on which we are determined to consider the even graver problems of the peace to come. He will see not merely the difficulties of salvaging and restoring to health and strength the broken peoples left in the wake of Hitler's panzer divisions. Beyond all that lie the necessities of establishing the basis of enduring peace—a task in which America, like the Powers of Europe and Asia, failed after 1918. We cannot address ourselves to that task without understanding how and why we failed the last time, how illusions rather than realities shaped the sentiments of nations and the policies of their governments. That note has received due emphasis in this book.

The contributors already named deserve only part of the credit for this work. The Department of Economics, Government, and History, and the Department of Military Art and Engineering of the United States Military Academy at West Point furnished in one body the bulk of the material without which the lectures could never have been prepared. The numerous others, civilian and military, individually and collectively, who have furnished information and assistance essential to the success of this presentation are too numerous to list here. In spite of their anonymity a debt is gratefully acknowledged.

Washington, D. C.
March 15, 1942.

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THE BACKGROUND OF OUR WAR

CHAPTER I

TWO WORLDS IN CONFLICT

> It is common fate of the indolent to see their rights become a prey to the active. The condition upon which God hath given liberty to man is eternal vigilance; which condition if he break, servitude is at once the consequence of his crime and the punishment of his guilt.
>
> John Philpot Curran
> *Speech upon the Right of Election,* 1790

The colonel turned out of the column and halted on the parade ground beside the colors. The silent platoons flowed through the gate of their home post and swept by. Gusts of snow blew through their ranks. The day happened to be December 7th. The regiment was home, home from four months of maneuvers, just a few hundred of the hundreds of thousands like themselves.

They had gone away a green unit, 95 per cent selectees. Now they were a rugged outfit and knew it. They were the product of long weeks in the field under conditions as close to actual war as capable and imaginative commanders could make them. This was the end of a thousand-mile motor march in four days to their home northern station in the gray twilight of this early winter evening. They had driven all day today with only short stops in deserted stretches of road. There was not even one radio to break the monotony for the men swathed in blankets for warmth in the squad trucks. There would be winter training. But there would be long Christmas furloughs and skiing and a shortened working day.

Next week the men over twenty-eight would be handed their transfers to the enlisted reserve and would leave the regiment, many still wondering a little if it were all necessary, wondering just how the world had got into such a devil of a mess that their careers and professions had to be interrupted by service for their country.

The last platoon went by, followed by the motor transportation. The colonel of the regiment turned to shake hands with the post commander. Words spoken on such occasions are as standardized as a military letter. But this was Sunday, December 7, 1941, and the opening sentence of the post commander's was not from the book. "The Japs are bombing Pearl Harbor."

War! War for the youth of America in uniform in this and hundreds of similar units. War for the youth yet to be called to the colors. War for the workman at the lathe and the clerk in the office, for the child and the housewife. Even peaceful America had learned slowly, unwillingly, that modern war is total war, fought on every foot from the home to the battle outpost line.

As the nation turned to the grim business of building for total and final victory, every American had and has the right to ask why this has happened again—twice in the lifetime of so many. In the five years before Versailles, nearly every British and French home had been hung with black for a son, a brother, a father who fell on Flanders Field or who died that they should not pass at Verdun.

Yet they gained only twenty years of truce, not an everlasting peace. Those determined American fighting men who held their shallow trenches at Chateau Thierry, who pressed forward resistlessly through the wheat at Soissons as German machine guns sowed death, who lie buried on quiet slopes in the Meuse-Argonne country where their divisions had swept back aggression in 1918—did those men die in vain? Have we done everything possible to guard the heritage of that peaceful and orderly world for which they fought and died?

For answer we can turn to the libraries, file on file and shelf on shelf. But the average individual finds only confusion in the thousands of pages. For answer we can turn to the political speeches, radio addresses, and newspaper editorials of the past two decades. Our confusion is only increased. The individual mind retains a jumble of dates and names, of conferences and treaties, of pledges and pacts, of promises and prophecies, of charges and countercharges.

If one goes far enough, there will be found a plausible answer for every accusation, a plausible reason for every action or lack of action. When we sum up the whole chain of events, however, the total is crystal clear. Those plans and hopes for an orderly, peaceful world, which budded at Versailles and appeared to flower in the first happy and talkative years of the League of Nations, have withered—crushed by a planned aggression.

In this short chapter it is both impossible and undesirable to tread again the tedious, winding, well-worn path of the history of that period from 1919 to 1939, a period which future generations will know as the Truce of Versailles.

It is right, however, to point out that this great war grew surely and certainly throughout these confused years of action and inaction. No attempt will be made to present completely the reasons and excuses, legitimate or otherwise, which caused that action or inaction. This has been done in hundreds of books, in hundreds of speeches and newspaper articles, and it will be done a thousand times again. We are concerned only with the major events in the background of our battle and with the comprehension of the nature of this world-wide war.

When the guns fell silent on November 11, 1918, the next step was obviously a peace treaty or treaties. These treaties, however imperfect, did not include such brutalities as appeared in the German treaty of Brest-Litovsk of a year earlier. The Versailles Treaty was a series of compromises. Its makers knew that they could not write either a perfect solution or an everlasting solution.

To provide peace for the world and to sustain it, there must come into existence a predominant desire for peaceful solutions in *all* nations capable of plunging the world into war again. But more was needed. There must exist both a machinery and a method for effecting peaceful changes and adjustments as the world evolved with the years.

While these two essentials to world order were developed (for such great forces do not spring into being overnight), the great nations of the world must be willing to co-operate, by a show of overwhelming force if necessary, in order that there should be no deviation and no turning back in the march toward these two essentials.

What happened? The instrument of co-operation was to be the League of Nations. Through it the world situation was to be kept on an even keel, and through it were to be evolved the various implements which would achieve peaceful changes and gradually effect disarmament.

But during the early nineteen-thirties, it was becoming increasingly apparent that a workable system to preserve peace did not exist. The League lacked the teeth to enforce major decisions, and the world was in grave economic difficulties. Such difficulties contained the seeds of movements which bred war.

What had occurred in the decade of twenties toward effecting a permanent solution of the world's problems? No important readjustments had been achieved by peaceful action since Versailles. As the memory of the war years of 1914-1918 grew dim, both the old and the new generations in many countries began to nourish real or fancied national grievances which were ably seized upon by local political leaders, who used them as a lever to achieve popularity.

Mussolini was already firmly in power and boasting of Italy's destiny in the Mediterranean. Hitler had his following in Germany. The Japanese were still looking hungrily at the rich territory on the mainland. Still, all was fairly calm on the surface, and those peoples of the world who were committed in their hearts to peace as a basic principle went on being primarily interested in their difficult internal affairs.

The basic premise to peace, that nations disarm, had not been followed uniformly. Disarmament must be more than scrapping of guns and ships; it must also be in the hearts of people. There had been little scrapping of even guns and ships. The naval disarmament had an odd result. The Japanese achieved a relative strength which gave them preponderance of force in the western Pacific. From the standpoint of the world peace movement, this relieved Japan of any fear of sudden attack from Great Britain or the United States. The disarmament conference also assumed that Japan would be good and not start using her strength in the far Pacific to upset the peace in the world.

In the other hemisphere, the navies of the United States, Great Britain, France, and Italy were reduced to a point where some one power might, by a sudden intensive building program, upset the equilibrium. Nothing really effective had been accomplished in the field of land disarmament, the major obstacle being the enmity of France and Germany.

The Germans, steeped in military tradition, were insistent either that France disarm or that they be allowed to rearm. But Germany and France with equal armies were not equal; France knew that Germany's larger population and reserve of manpower would make her a constant threat. No progress was achieved.

What of mental disarmament, the will to peace among the peoples of the world's nations? This was vital to ultimate success. A group of these nations launched on an all-out program of mental disarmament. France did this to some extent, Great Britain to a greater extent, and the United States most of all. Their peoples were quickly and easily convinced that wars were evil things. Talented authors of histories and popular books debunked the war of 1914-1918. There were other features of this drive toward mental disarmament. Unfortunately the general result was a tendency toward the weakening of the will to take any action until a threat should appear at the very doorstep.

This was fine and a very logical step toward world peace, providing the minds of the people of *every* nation were conditioned the same way. Then there could never be any nation to threaten the doorstep of any other. But this last was not true. As the later years of the thirties unfolded, it became apparent that there were two groups of nations—one group clearly defined, the other vaguely. It became clear that the peoples of Germany, Italy, and Japan had adopted force and the threat of force as a means of achieving their ends. It also became apparent that most of the other nations were committed to peace—almost at any price. These two worlds were bound to come into conflict. But we were slow to believe bad news.

Mussolini's Fascist policy had long preached war as the noblest means of achieving national ends. The bait he held out to his people, in the form of a modern Roman Empire, could only mean war. Why should Italy, a country poor in resources, not threatened by any neighbor, build a huge army unless it was intending to reap a profit by aggression?

Another spot of international infection blossomed in 1931 in the Far East. Japan took Manchuria. Yet those peace-loving peoples of the world in the end chose to treat it as a local incident rather than as an unveiling of Japan's policy of planned aggression. Japan's step-by-step policy, conceived long in advance, will be covered in a later chapter.

Let us turn and consider the disintegration of law, order, and liberty in the Western world. In 1933, Hitler came into power in Germany, a true product of the German people's state of mind. This nation, suffering from economic depression, never relinquishing her ingrained militarism, hating the Treaty of Versailles, was willing, nay eager, to accept a leader who promised satisfaction for her hates and hopes (*see* Note 1, p. 253).

Easily susceptible to regimentation, the Reich became quickly molded into a single cohesive unit designed to achieve a new type of "manifest destiny"—the Nazi dream. This dream seems to have come in three installments: first, the union under Hitler of all Germans scattered over Europe; second, the building of a German "living space" indefinite in definition, but encompassing most of Europe; third, world domination.

The cards, for the most part, were down by 1934, but few dared to read them. On one side of the table were ranged Italy, Japan, and Germany, their populations mentally attuned for aggression, their governments committed to physical armaments. On the other side waited the other great Powers, practically yearning for peace. And the inhabitants of the United States and Great Britain still continued their policy of mental disarmament.

Now the forces of aggression commenced to move purposefully forward, step by step. Their plan was well conceived because the governments of the peace-loving nations could not, or would not, endanger their continued peace by a determined stand on one comparatively minor item. Excuses were always plausible.

Let us look at the record of the two infection spots on opposite sides of the earth. Manchuria 1931, Shanghai 1932, the attack on China 1937, Indo-China 1940, Pearl Harbor 1941.

Turn the globe through 180 degrees. Hitler took Germany out of the League in 1934. He announced German rearmament in 1935. Italy came on the stage in 1935 to attack Abyssinia. In 1936, Germany and Italy joined hands to support one side in the bloody Spanish War.

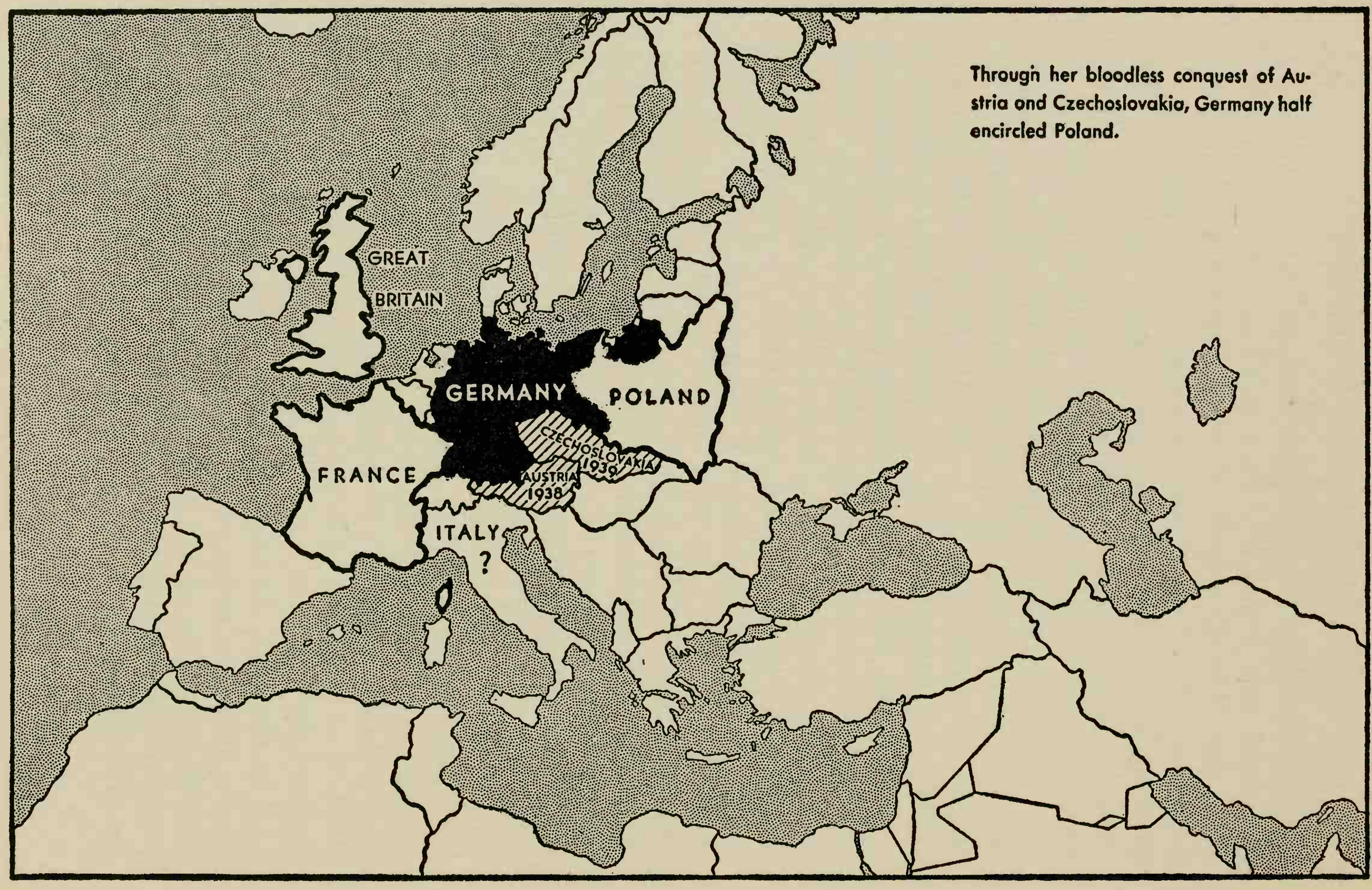
Today the internal issues in that war fade into comparative unimportance before the hard, unalterable fact that Germany found in Spain a laboratory to test equipment and blitzkrieg methods, that through Franco's victory and the destruction of Spanish democracy, she achieved a friendly power in France's rear, a possible base for planes and submarines which in her final all-out effort would complicate the problems of England.

It was in 1936 that Japan joined formally with Italy and Germany in the pact called "Anti-Comintern." The aggressors had formed a united front under a cloak popular to many of the peoples still hoping for peace.

In 1936, Hitler moved troops into the Rhineland. "Why not?" one may well ask. In 1936 perhaps a few of us went so far as to point out that troops must enter the Rhineland before it could be fortified so strongly that France and England would think long before taking positive action if Germany moved south or east. Even fewer of us noted that that movement of troops into the Rhineland was a necessary preliminary stride toward using the Rhineland as a base from which to carry out another great step in the drive to world power, the conquest of western Europe.

And in 1938, Hitler turned south to absorb Austria and, incidentally, to flank Czechoslovakia. In September of 1938, Czechoslovakia, deserted by her friends, bowed to the Nazi yoke; and Poland, already exposed, was now flanked on the south by lands garrisoned by German military might.

In the face of this staggering series of events, England's representative at the demise of Czechoslovakia landed from his plane in England to announce that he had brought "peace for our time." And he believed it. So did Daladier of France and so did many hopeful,


GREAT BRITAIN
GERMANY
POLAND
FRANCE
CZECHOSLOVAKIA 1939
AUSTRIA 1938
ITALY
?

Through her bloodless conquest of Austria and Czechoslovakia, Germany half encircled Poland.

I. THE LINE-UP OF THE POWERS

wishful-thinking Americans. The voice of Winston Churchill was heard above the expressions of relief throughout the world. "Britain and France had to choose between war and dishonor. They choose dishonor. They will have war." The world stood not on the doorstep of "peace for our time" but on the threshold of Armageddon.

In spite of Mr. Chamberlain's sanguine remark about peace, England and France were already beginning slowly to rearm. Quick rearmament cannot be accomplished without major dislocations in a nation's economy and major sacrifices on the part of every individual. England and France turned slowly and reluctantly toward national economic mobilization. Germany and Italy were already long geared to war.

In the spring of 1939, the sands were rapidly running out. Hitler took Memel in March. Mussolini, already far behind in the league of international loot, took Albania on Good Friday of the same year. Hitler turned to the next step. He demanded Danzig and the Polish Corridor. But the step-by-step policy was playing out in Europe. (It would not play out in the Pacific for two more years.)

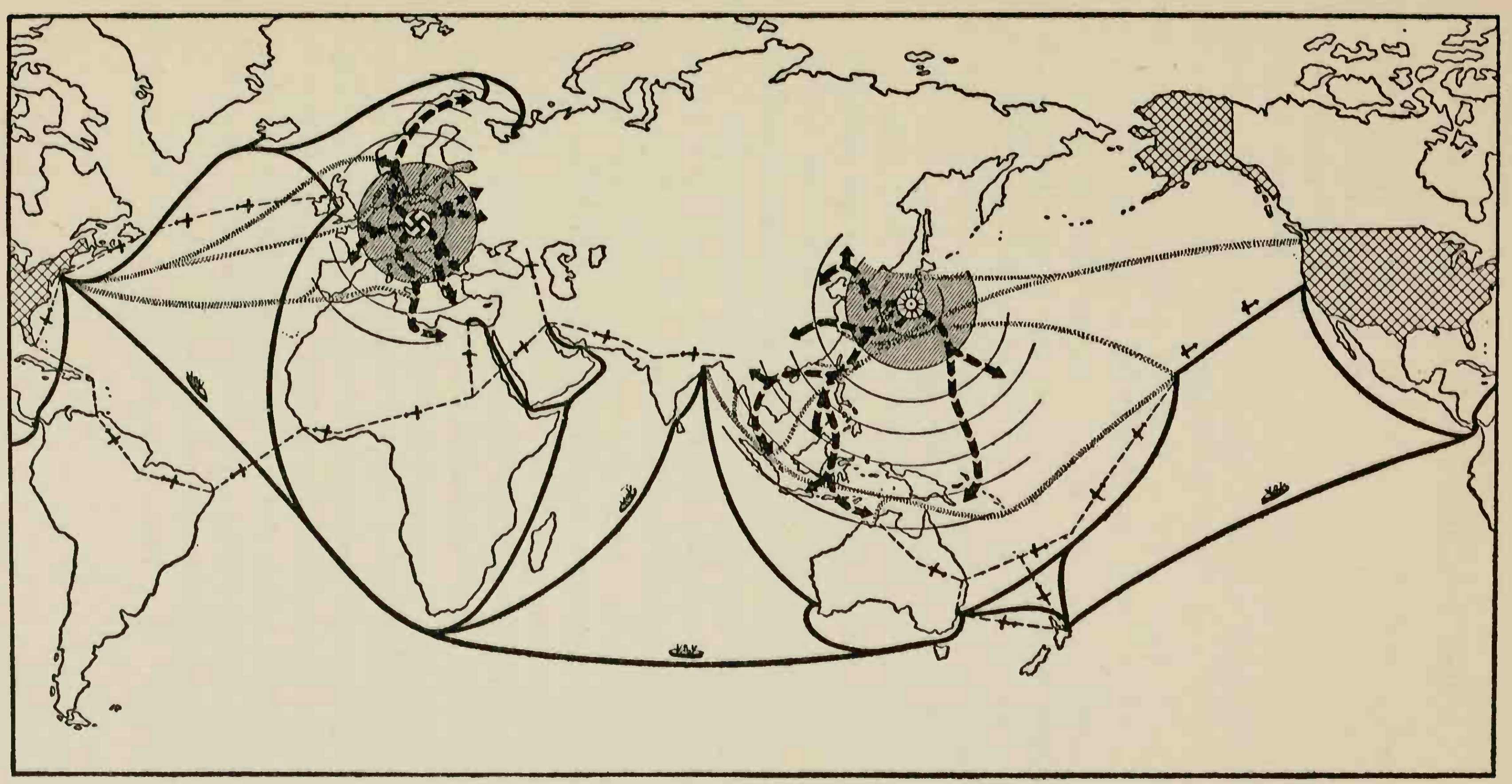
Alarmed, yet overconfident at the same time, Poland began to mobilize her army to resist German attack. The Nazi armies were poised and ready for assault. On September 1, 1939, Hitler for the first time openly used his huge armed force. Behind him lay a long series of bloodless victories. Poland would not have been costly had not Britain and France realized at last that there was no peace in Germany's policy, past, present, or future; accordingly, they declared war on September 3.

From the story of the past ten years, we cannot take any comfort. On the preceding pages, the framework of events which led irresistibly to world war has been presented. There was at the time a plausible explanation or excuse for every action or lack of action. We can, however, learn certain lessons for tomorrow.

The first lesson is that there are essentially but two ways of life, but two theories of international action, and truly two worlds in conflict. The Axis forces we face have long followed in peace the most ruthless principles ever enunciated as maxims of war. The aim of the Axis Powers has been growing ever more apparent since 1931. The peace-loving peoples of the world long refused to realize that those methods formerly used only in open hostilities were major instruments of outwardly peaceful relations of the Axis Powers. The wartime arts of sabotage, subversion, propaganda, and economic warfare were fairly well demonstrated from 1914-1918. The Axis found them useful in peacetime.

Deceit is one of the means by which a good general may, in wartime, accomplish the surprise of the enemy. The Axis Powers used it to the utmost in time of peace. Promises were freely made to lull other nations into states of inactivity; but pacts and treaties were regarded merely as scraps of paper. Their use or destruction was incidental to an ever-increasing, all-consuming purpose on the part of the aggressor nations. We have sadly learned that there can be no peace without an assurance of international morality.

When we look at this dreary history of the years from 1931-1939 and comprehend the carefully planned progressive aggression of the Axis Powers, we have the explanation to their plan and strategy of waging war. Look at the map of the world (Map 2, p. 15) and turn



2. THE WORLD FRONT

back the pages of history to 1931. Japan on one side of the earth and Germany and Italy on the other are the focal points of infection about to break out in the world.

At that time, it was well argued that Japan was economically weak and far from any important strategic points, that Germany and Italy also were economically weak and could never embark on a policy of aggression because they were closely surrounded by neighbors committed to maintaining peace. But when Japan acquired supreme military strength in a part of the world isolated from other great Powers, she was able to concentrate that strength successfully against point after point on the perimeter of attractive lands and islands surrounding her.

The strategic positions of Japan and Germany in the world were weak when those countries were militarily weak. But armed with military might they were strategically located to reap the richest harvest possible by use of aggression. As Germany built her military strength, she moved carefully one step at a time, at different points in the perimeter, each step placing her in a more advantageous position to undertake the already planned next step.

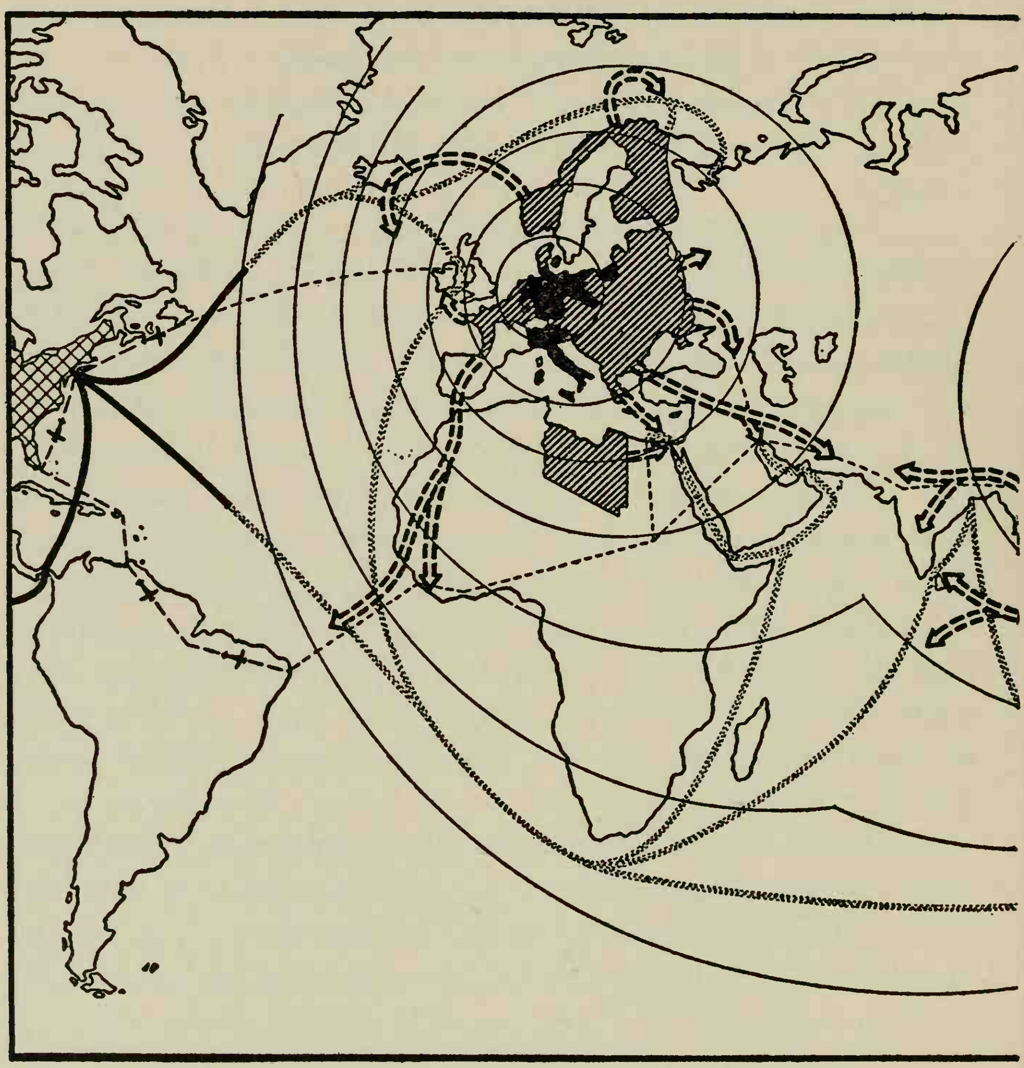
First rearmament, then a bulwark in the west by remilitarizing the Rhineland, then Austria, thus flanking Czechoslovakia and opening the road to the Balkans, then Czechoslovakia—and so to war. The basic strategic policy still continued, as will be shown in the succeeding chapters. The military power of the Axis nations, from their central bases on opposite sides of the earth, was concentrated to strike swiftly at single objectives on the perimeters of their central location.

Poland fell, removing the threat to the east and opening a front on Russia; Denmark and Norway went down, giving bases opposite England's northern sea lanes and securing her northern flank. Germany then concentrated her fighting mass to destroy Holland and Belgium, whose forces had never become co-ordinated with Britain and France, and then went on to crush France.

Bases then were obtained from which to clamp the southern half of the pincers on Britain's sea lanes. More than that, the perimeter of her threats was expanded to direct attack on Britain, Iceland, Gibraltar, and West Africa, as well as points to the east and south (*see* Map 3, pp. 18–19). Still expanding from the center, still moving one step at a time, the spearheads of German aggression first moved through Hungary, leading to Bulgaria, then to Rumania, all without bloodshed, by the threat of overwhelming force. Yugoslavia was practically surrounded and went down in a pincers movement, exposing too long a line of frontier for the Greeks and their British allies to hope to defend. The German spearhead pricked at the gateway to the Near East.

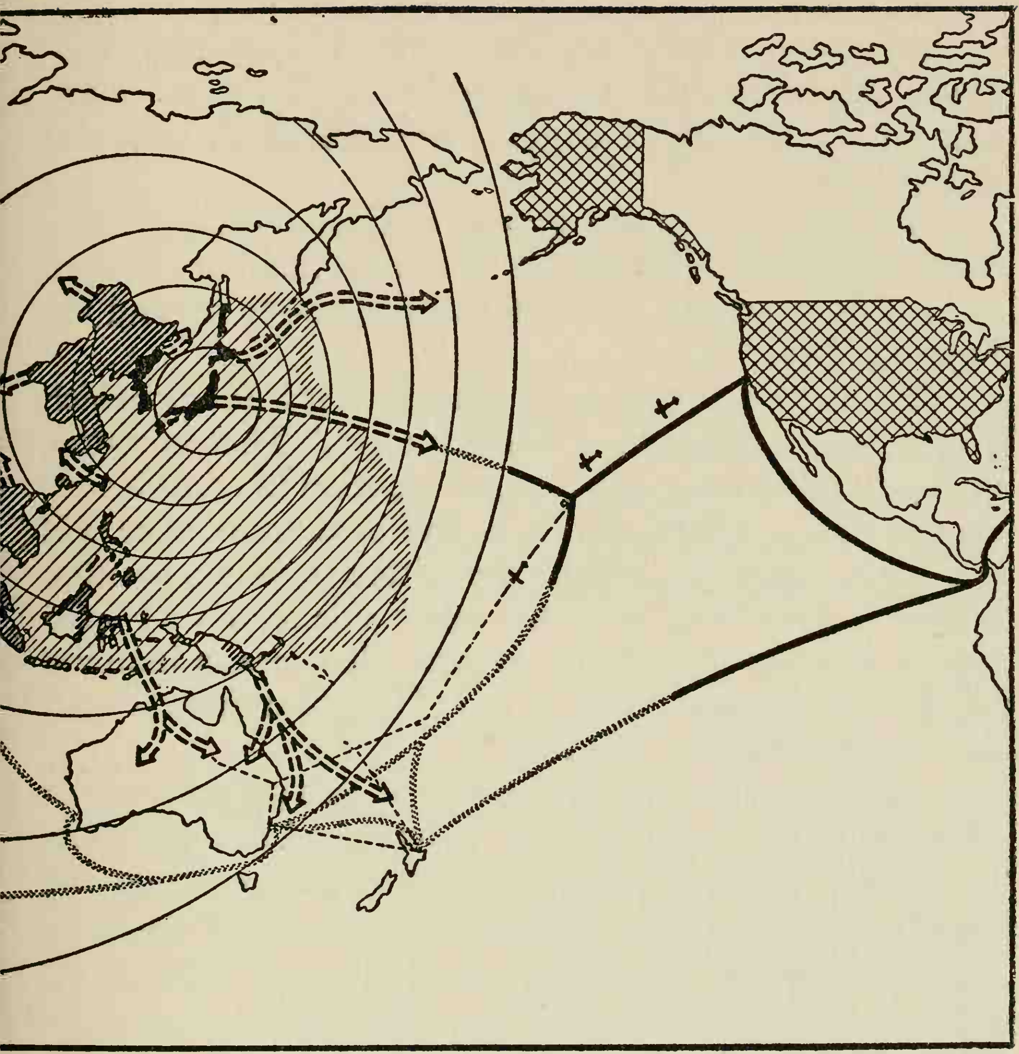
Only Russia threatened their advance. The next step was an alliance with Finland, thus gaining a broad front on which Germany could concentrate large forces at various strategic points for spearhead drives into Russia.

If we turn to the infection spot in the Eastern world, the picture is much the same. Prior to the outbreak of general war in the Far East, Japan had laid an excellent foundation of preparation. The Versailles Treaty had granted her a blanket of islands in the western Pacific which guarded against interference from the United States.



3. PLANS FOR

Still expanding from the center, still moving one step at a time, the spearheads of German aggression . . .



ORLD CONQUEST

Japan . . . moved against objective after objective in turn, always, like Germany, moving outward on radials from her focus of military power around the Japanese Sea.

In the Washington Naval Agreement of 1922 she obtained a guarantee that other great Powers would not fortify bases in her area of interest, soon to be her area of aggression. Then she started her step-by-step technique. Manchuria fell and gave her both a flank guard against Russia and a dagger ever poised to strike at Soviet Siberia.

Turning south, she moved against objective after objective in turn, always, like Germany, moving outward on radials from her focus of military power around the Japanese Sea.

In the grim business of war, there is a factor which professional soldiers call "the initiative." That initiative gives an individual, a general, or a nation the freedom to choose when, where, and how the next movement will start. The opponent, lacking the initiative, is in a position where he must wait until the other side shows its hand before starting to meet the attack. That means jumping off late, and time is vital in war; "Get thar fustest with the mostest men" is still basic.

Since the undeclared opening of this present war at Mukden in 1931, the aggressors have had the initiative. In the early years of the undeclared war, the peace-loving nations could have blocked the growth of aggression by concerted action. That was yesterday, and there is no point in mentioning it except as a lesson for the future. Once the Axis Powers gained their head start in armaments, the power to decide what happened next, and where, was theirs until the United Nations could build and bring a greater force to the field of battle.

Consider again Map 2—the points of infection. Germany and Japan were like top-notch football backfields. They could call their power plays for any point in the opposing line, a line all too weak in some places. They could and did do even more. They could pick both the time to play and the playing field.

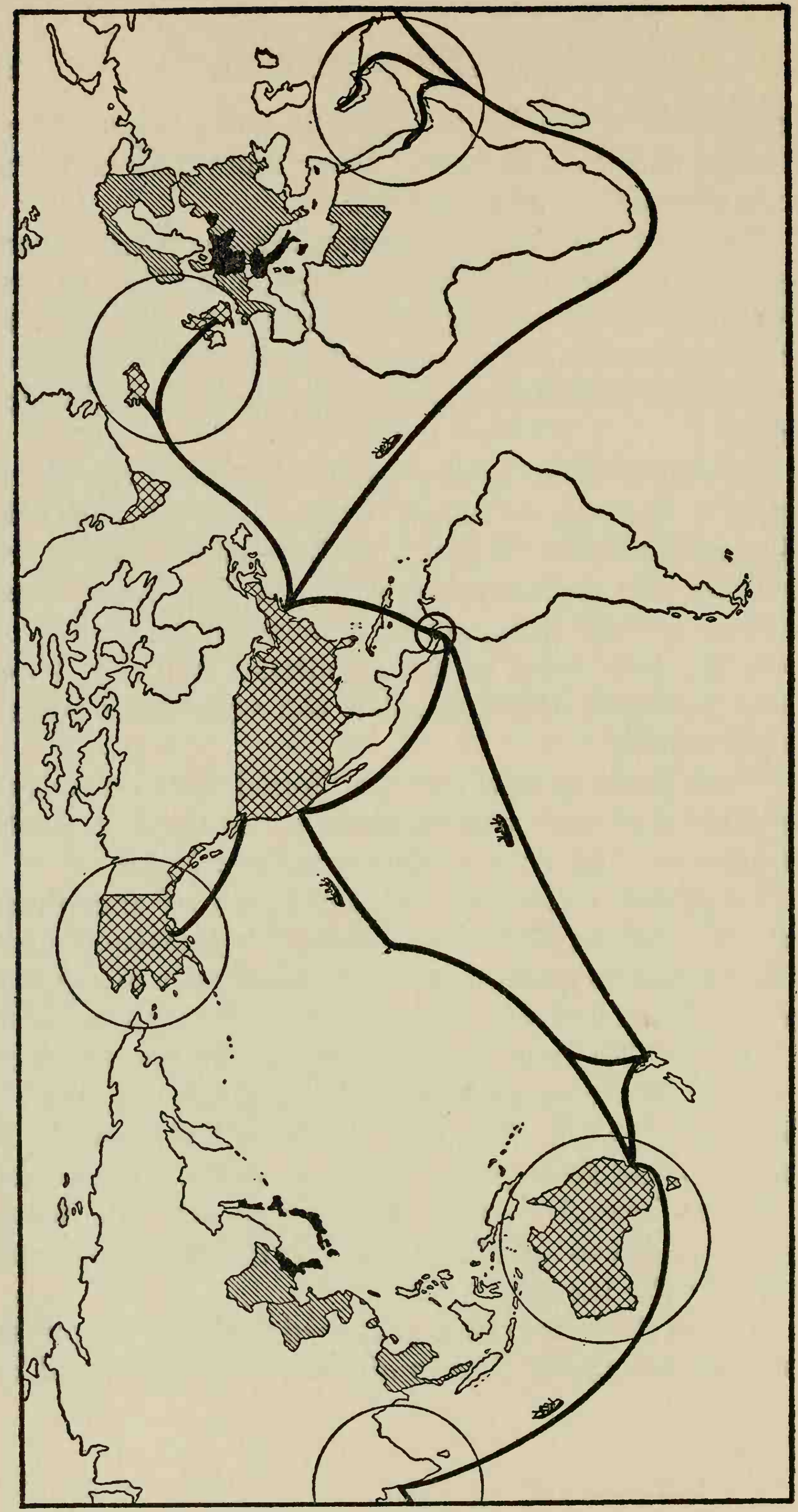
With every thrust, with every gain, the Axis Powers progressed further from their own goal line. They gained the opportunity to use a greater variety of plays and to take more chances. Their opponents, on the other hand, had to spread their defensive line over a wider and wider area.

To oppose such tactics on the football field, there must be a fighting defensive backfield, which backs up the line and smashes the plays. In the years of undeclared war, there was no defensive backfield. The thing called collective security was merely a hope. In the world of tomorrow, there must be some collective security, a defensive backfield which smashes the aggressors before they get started.

What is the problem of the United Nations today? They hold the outer communication lines of the world (*see* Map 2). The Axis holds the interior lines.

To achieve victory, the Axis will try to change those black open highways to broken ones by successfully turning the projected lines of possible spearheads of aggression into black arrows of successful advance (*see* Map 3). It would then only remain to digest the areas broken and cut off by the spearheads. Since 1931 the aggressors' technique has been the same on individual battlefields as in the broad strategy of world conquest. Spearheads are driven through to seize strategic points. The heavy divisions follow to hold the points and to close the pincers and digest the trapped areas.

Across the lines of this proposed world envelopment stand two ramparts. The lands of the Soviets, and of



4. BASES FOR THE OFFENSIVE

China and the British in India and in the Near East. The Western Hemisphere stands against the spearheads pointed across the Atlantic and Pacific (*see* Map 3).

The United States now finds itself more than the "arsenal of democracy." This country is the citadel and focal point from which the United Nations can and must take the initiative. England is now tantamount to an outpost base (*see* Map 4, p. 22). The huge task we face is to hold the key points through which the Axis spearheads must go (Iceland, Greenland, the Aleutians, Suez, and many others), to blunt the spearheads, and then, selecting a few strategic lines of advance, to drive them back over their paths with overwhelming forces and to eradicate their sources forever.

The regiment which marched through the gate of its home post in the dusk of that cold Sunday last December has marched out again. With dozens of others it has gone on its way toward one of the theaters of action. This book is prepared to inform that thinking, fighting man, the American soldier, of that sequence of events which has sent Americans to fields of combat. It has been written in order that he may understand why there are today two worlds in conflict, only one of which can survive.

CHAPTER II

THE CAMPAIGN IN POLAND

September 1–29, 1939

> We have just celebrated the fifth anniversary of the conclusion of our nonaggression pact with Poland. There can scarcely be any difference of opinion today among the true friends of peace with regard to the value of this agreement.
>
> ADOLF HITLER
> *To the Reichstag,* January 30, 1939

THE TREATY OF VERSAILLES created one of the trouble spots of Europe when it set up the Polish Corridor to the sea, separating German territory for the purpose, and made an international city of the German port of Danzig. When Hitler denounced the Treaty of Versailles in 1936 and started on his own revision of that document, it was only a question of time before he would turn his attention to Poland.

The Nazi hordes swarmed into Poland because Hitler had failed for the first time. He had demanded; and Austria had been delivered by an Austrian. He had threatened; and Czechoslovakia had been delivered by the great Powers. With Austria and Czechoslovakia incorporated within the bounds of the Reich, Poland was next on the list. But against Poland demands and threats, promises and cajolery were vain. The Poles and their allies stood firm. For the first time Hitler had to resort to his final bludgeon, armed force.

Danzig became the focal point of the German operations. The Nazi party had been active in that city since 1933. Supported by the parent party in Berlin, the Danzig Nazis were a constant source of annoyance to the Polish government at Warsaw. After the Munich Conference the Danzig Nazis grew more and more active and vocal in their demands for return to the Reich.

The first formal step in the Polish campaign was taken on March 27, 1939, when Hitler made a formal demand on Poland that she acquiesce in the return of Danzig to German control. He also demanded the building of a road across the Polish Corridor (the Province of Pomorze) which would be out of the jurisdiction of the Polish government. To both demands Poland made an unconditional refusal.

Almost coincident with the Polish refusal, on March 31, Great Britain guaranteed aid to Poland in the event of aggression. This agreement was expanded into a mutual assistance pact on April 6. Hitler used this pact as the excuse for denouncing his own nonaggression pact with Poland on April 28. For the next four months Germany followed her already proven policy for dealing with smaller nations. "Tourists" appeared in Danzig in droves. Arms were smuggled across the border in quantities. Incidents between the Nazis and the Polish customs officials were created. The German Propaganda Ministry ground out stories about the "atrocious treatment" of the German minority in Poland. The final phase of the preliminary campaign against Poland began on August 16. On that date Hitler presented a new set of demands, implying the annexation of the Corridor among them. The next day German armies began to mass in Slovakia, on the southern border of Poland. On

August 20, Germany and Russia concluded a trade pact and Albert Forster, Nazi leader in Danzig, announced that the "day of deliverance is at hand"; on August 23, Germany and Russia concluded their nonaggression pact.

The British government, shaken as it was by the breakdown of its own negotiations with Russia, immediately began a vain effort to reconcile the differences between Germany and Poland. Perhaps the most concrete offer made during these negotiations was Hitler's offer to protect the British Empire after he had dealt with Poland. The tension mounted steadily, with the German demands standing. On August 29, Hitler announced that the state of affairs in Poland was "unbearable for a great Power," that Poland had "forced Germany, after remaining a passive onlooker for many months, in turn to take necessary steps for the safeguarding of justified German interests." He demanded that a Polish emissary, with full powers to deal with the German demands, be sent immediately to Berlin.

On August 30, Poland began her belated mobilization of man power. At midnight on August 30-31 the German Foreign Minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop, rapidly read to the British ambassador a sixteen-point proposal for the settling of the crisis. He refused to deliver the text into the hands of the ambassador because, as he said, Poland had sent no emissary to deal with it. The proposals included the return of Danzig to the Reich, the retention of Gdynia by Poland, and a plebiscite in the Corridor to determine its action. When the Polish ambassador finally gained admission to the Foreign Minister on August 31, the Germans refused to talk to him. Hitler then announced almost sorrowfully, "No other means is left to me than to meet force with force."

German troops crossed the borders of Poland at dawn on September 1, 1939. Great Britain and France immediately delivered ultimatums to Germany. Italy tried to play the role of peacemaker in calling for another conference, but Britain and France refused to sit at a conference table while there were German troops in Poland. The German divisions continued their drives into Poland, and Hitler refused to reply to either Britain or France. When the British ultimatum expired at 11 A. M. on September 3, Prime Minister Chamberlain declared war; Premier Daladier followed suit six hours later.

In 1939, Poland was a nation of about thirty-five million people. About twenty-five million of these were engaged in agriculture through the greater part of the country. The industrial area of Poland was along the west and southwest borders. The population was fairly homogeneous in the center of the country, but there was a large admixture of Germans in the western areas and of Russians in the eastern areas. Danzig was a hotbed of fifth column activity; throughout the rest of the western section both Germans and Poles were working secretly and openly for German annexation. When the German troops moved in, these fifth columnists were useful in a variety of ways (*see* Note 2, p. 253).

In the strategic situation at the outbreak of war the advantage lay entirely with Germany. Since the annexation of Czechoslovakia, Poland was a salient pushed into the body of the Reich. Armies moving directly south from East Prussia, directly east from Germany, and directly north from Slovakia would meet at Warsaw. Behind Poland was Russia, who had guaranteed her neutrality in the conflict.

On the west, Germany had little to fear from Poland's allies. Hitler had begun the construction of the Siegfried Line, Germany's West Wall, in 1937. Half a million men had been working on it constantly, and it was practically completed by the beginning of the invasion of Poland. As the Maginot Line protected the eastern border of France, so the Siegfried Line protected the western frontier of Germany from invasion. Unlike its French counterpart, the Siegfried Line was not a continuous fortress. It was a series of independent positions organized in great depth so that any assaulting force would be subjected to a withering cross fire. It was not designed to stop an attack immediately, but rather to wear down that attack with the stiffening resistance in depth until a counterattack to repel the invader could be successfully launched. The operation of that defensive strategy was demonstrated in the first month of the war. From September 5 until September 15 cautiously advancing French units pushed into the Siegfried Line until they had occupied about one hundred square miles of German territory; but by the end of the month the German counterattack had restored the lines of September 3.

On the sea, Germany's position with respect to Poland was ideal. The Baltic Sea was effectually a German lake with its entrance, the Kattegat, completely under German control. Within the Baltic the units of the German fleet could operate without opposition from the British Navy. Even units from the German fleet in the North Sea could get to the Baltic without British opposition, for the Kiel Canal across the base of the Danish peninsula connects the two bodies of water.

As a result of these strategic advantages Poland was entirely cut off from her allies. Britain and France could furnish little aid during the short campaign. The Siegfried Line prevented the French from applying enough pressure in the west to relieve German pressure on Poland; in 1914, Russian pressure on the east had compelled the withdrawal of six German divisions before the Battle of the Marne. The Royal Air Force made an attack on the Kiel Canal on the night of September 3; but its subsequent activity was confined to leaflet raids directed at the German people, since the supply lines to Poland were beyond its reach.

Judged by the standards of the first World War, the Polish army was a good one. It was well trained and well organized, but according to first World War standards. It had thirty-two first-line divisions and about thirty reserve divisions; in all, it could mobilize about one and a half million trained men. But in tanks, planes, and motor equipment the Polish army was sadly deficient. Its twelve-hundred-plane air force was knocked out of the skies, or destroyed on the ground, in the opening stages of the campaign. There was little mechanization in the entire army. The Polish cavalry was among its best troops, but cavalry proved to be no match for mechanized forces.

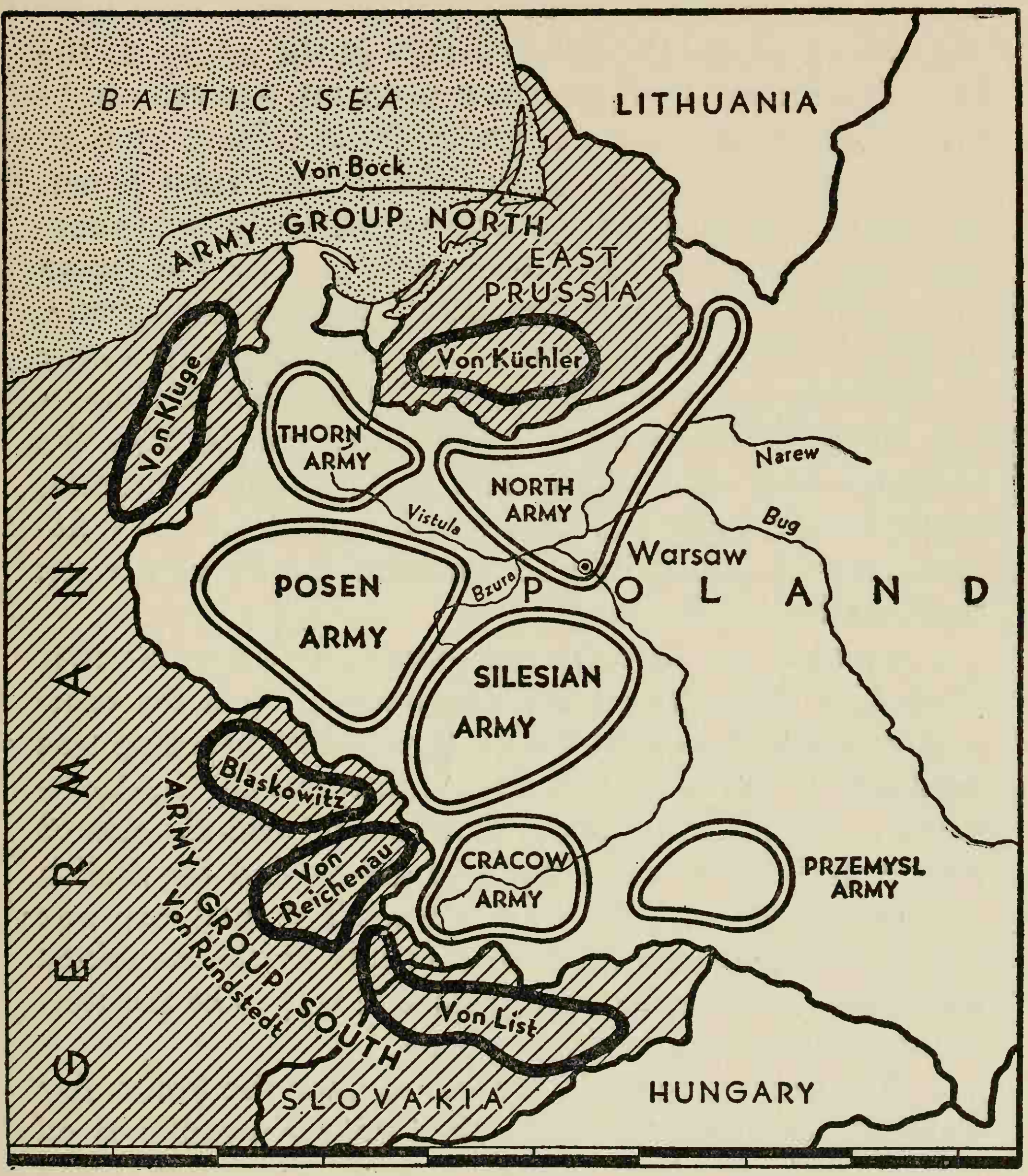
The Poles apparently had settled on a defensive plan which included the use of delaying tactics in a strategic withdrawal as their main armies fell back to cover Warsaw and the industrial triangle in the southwest. When the German attack became extended and weakened, and the expected aid from the west began to be effective, the Poles planned to counterattack in sufficient force to repel the invading Germans and perhaps even to launch an invasion of Germany.

The alternative to this plan was a complete Polish withdrawal to a line along the Vistula and Narew Rivers deep in the interior of Poland. With her armies massed along that line, they would have a much shorter and stronger line which was not open to the danger of flank attacks by the German forces. The disadvantages of this plan were twofold. At one stroke the Poles would be giving up the richest and best-developed section of their country, many of their industrial cities, two thirds of their fuel and mineral resources, and perhaps a third of their people. From such a deep withdrawal, furthermore, the possibility of an offensive against Germany was remote.

The Polish General Staff made its disposition to protect the western frontier. Of the four Polish armies, the Posen Army was by far the strongest. The Corridor and Silesian Armies, on either flank, were relatively weak. The Grodno Army Reserve existed mostly on paper (*see* Map 5, p. 31). Against these forces the Germans threw ninety infantry divisions and eight armored (panzer) divisions, totaling over a million men. They left twenty reserve divisions of older troops in the Siegfried Line to hold that wall against any attack from the west.

The German attack on Poland is the outstanding modern example of the classic Battle of Cannae, fought 216 years before the Christian era. Its essential feature was the double envelopment. Hannibal, the Carthaginian, weakened his center to invite the attack of the Romans; he massed his real strength on the flanks. When the Romans launched their full attack at the Carthaginian center they found themselves surrounded; only a handful escaped.

In Poland the set-up for the double envelopment was

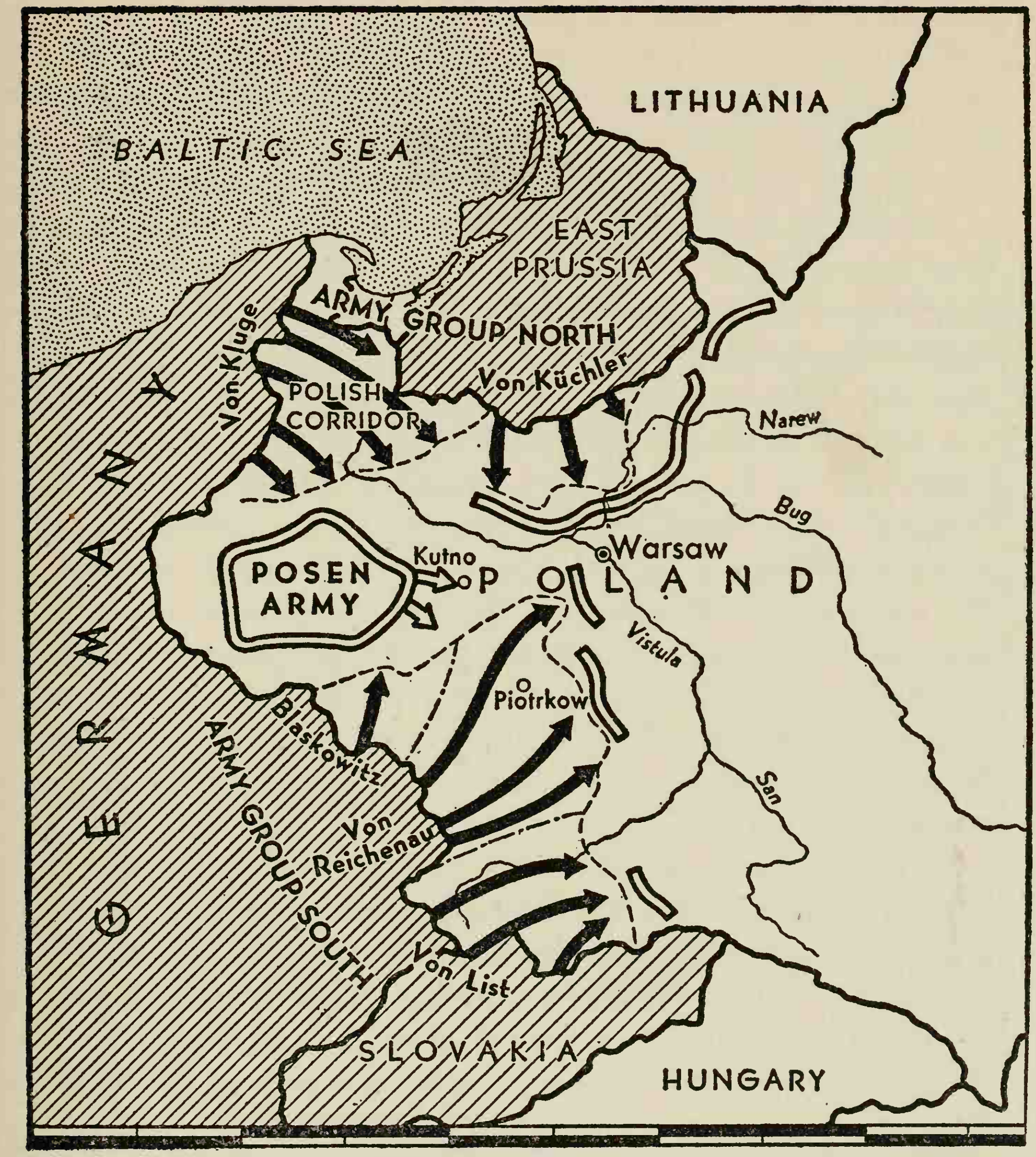

BALTIC SEA
Von Bock
ARMY GROUP NORTH
LITHUANIA
EAST PRUSSIA
Von Kluge
Von Küchler
THORN ARMY
NORTH ARMY
Narew
Vistula
Bug
Warsaw
POSEN ARMY
Bzura
POLAND
SILESIAN ARMY
GERMANY
Blaskowitz
Von Reichenau
ARMY GROUP SOUTH
Von Rundstedt
CRACOW ARMY
PRZEMYSL ARMY
Von List
SLOVAKIA
HUNGARY

5. THE POLISH CAMPAIGN, SEPTEMBER I

all but perfect because of the natural flanking positions held by the Germans. They left only relatively weak frontier troops facing the Posen Army in the center of the line. Their main strength was concentrated in the southern group of three armies under the command of General Oberst von Rundstedt, one of Germany's ablest commanders. This group of armies was to drive toward Warsaw, with its main blow being delivered by the center army under General von Reichenau. The northern group, commanded by General von Bock, was composed of only two armies, separated by the Polish Corridor. The western army, under General von Kluge, was to take the Corridor and turn south. The army in East Prussia, under General von Kückler, was to drive first on Warsaw, later swinging east to seize the territory between the Vistula and the Bug.

As soon as the campaign opened it was clear that the major objective of the German plan was the complete annihilation of the Polish forces. The first step was destruction of the Polish communications by the Luftwaffe (German Air Force). The second was the use of panzer and mechanized units to get behind the Polish armies and cut off their withdrawals. The final step was complete destruction of these elements by the combined use of foot and mechanized troops. It was to be the Battle of Cannae on a mammoth scale.

The Luftwaffe promptly knocked out the Polish Air Force by bombing its fields, thus destroying planes on the ground, and by air combat. From that time on it had a free hand in the complete destruction of railroads, highways, telegraph and telephone lines, and radio; bombs rained on bridges, junctions, concentrations, cities, and radio stations. Within three days the Polish armies were

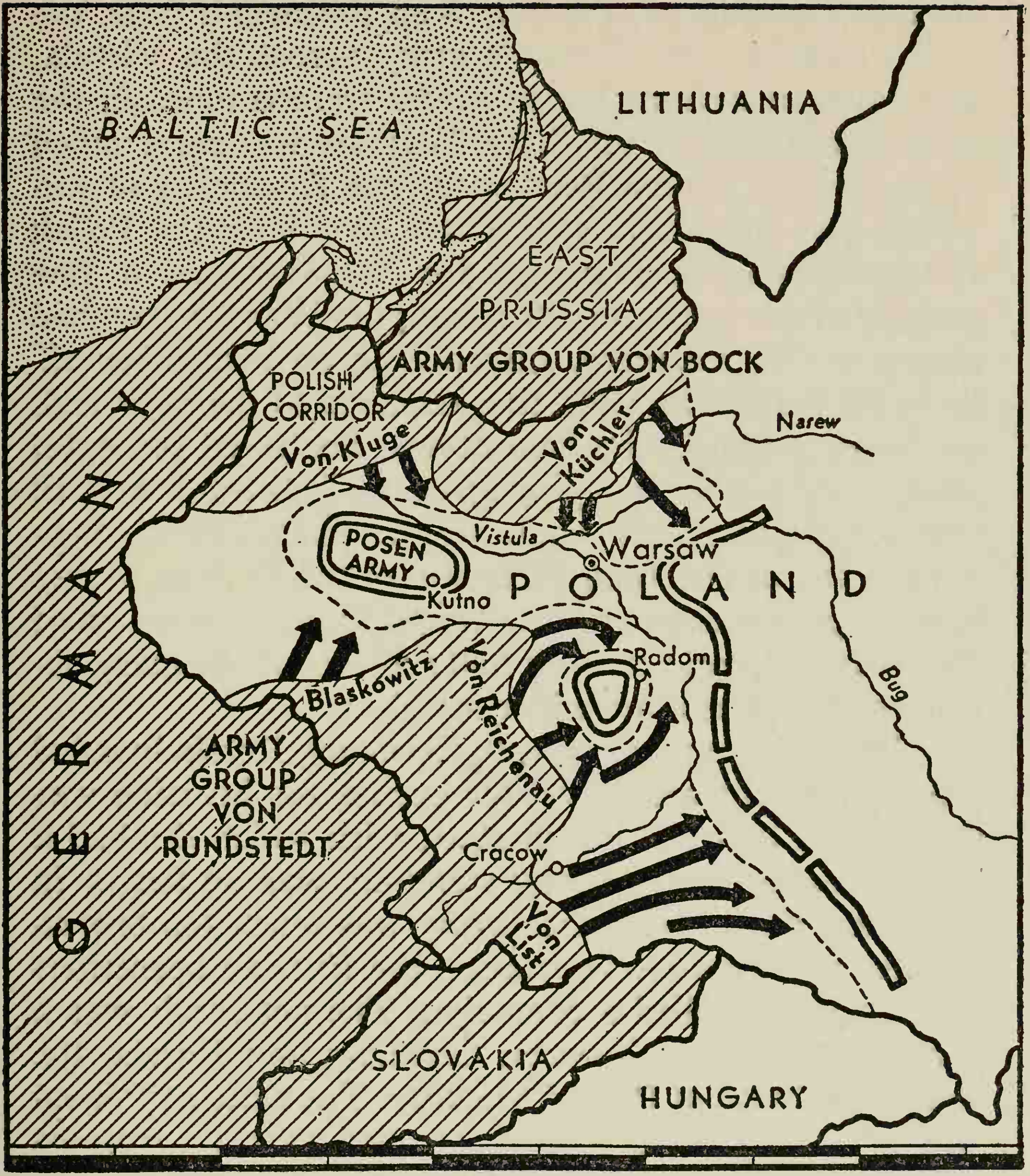

BALTIC SEA
LITHUANIA
EAST PRUSSIA
ARMY GROUP NORTH
Von Kluge
Von Küchler
POLISH CORRIDOR
Narew
Bug
GERMANY
POSEN ARMY
Kutno
Warsaw
POLAND
Vistula
Piotrkow
Blaskowitz
ARMY GROUP SOUTH
Von Reichenau
San
Von List
SLOVAKIA
HUNGARY

6. THE POLISH CAMPAIGN, SEPTEMBER 7

out of touch with each other and with their capital. Except for their cavalry, they were without means of reconnoitering enemy movements. And it was impossible to send some hundreds of thousands of mobilized reserve forces to the fighting fronts.

In the first week of the campaign the double drive on Warsaw had all but made connections west of the city (*see* Map 6, p. 33). The army under General von Kluge had driven south through the Corridor, leaving eighty thousand Polish troops cut off in a pocket. General von Kückler's army had cut south from East Prussia, almost to the line of the Vistula and the Bug. The Posen Army was almost surrounded by the armies of Generals von Kluge and Blaskowitz, while General von Reichenau's army, led by a panzer division which reached the suburbs of Warsaw on September 8, was driving into the heart of the country. The Polish soldiers were putting up a gallant fight, but they were being overcome by superior power. The German timetable seemed to be fast, but it was seriously threatened by Polish units at several points.

Von Kückler drove across the Narew River on September 7 and reached the Bug River on the ninth, pushing a wide drive between the Vistula and the Bug east of Warsaw. Von Kluge drove toward Kutno to complete the surrounding of the Posen Army. Von Reichenau trapped a Polish force of sixty thousand west of Radom with the fast movement of his mechanized units. East of the Vistula and the San River the Polish armies, scattered by the drives of von Reichenau and von List, were trying to reform. Warsaw had enemy forces on three sides and was being subjected to terrific bombardments by both airplanes and artillery (*see* Map 7, p. 35).

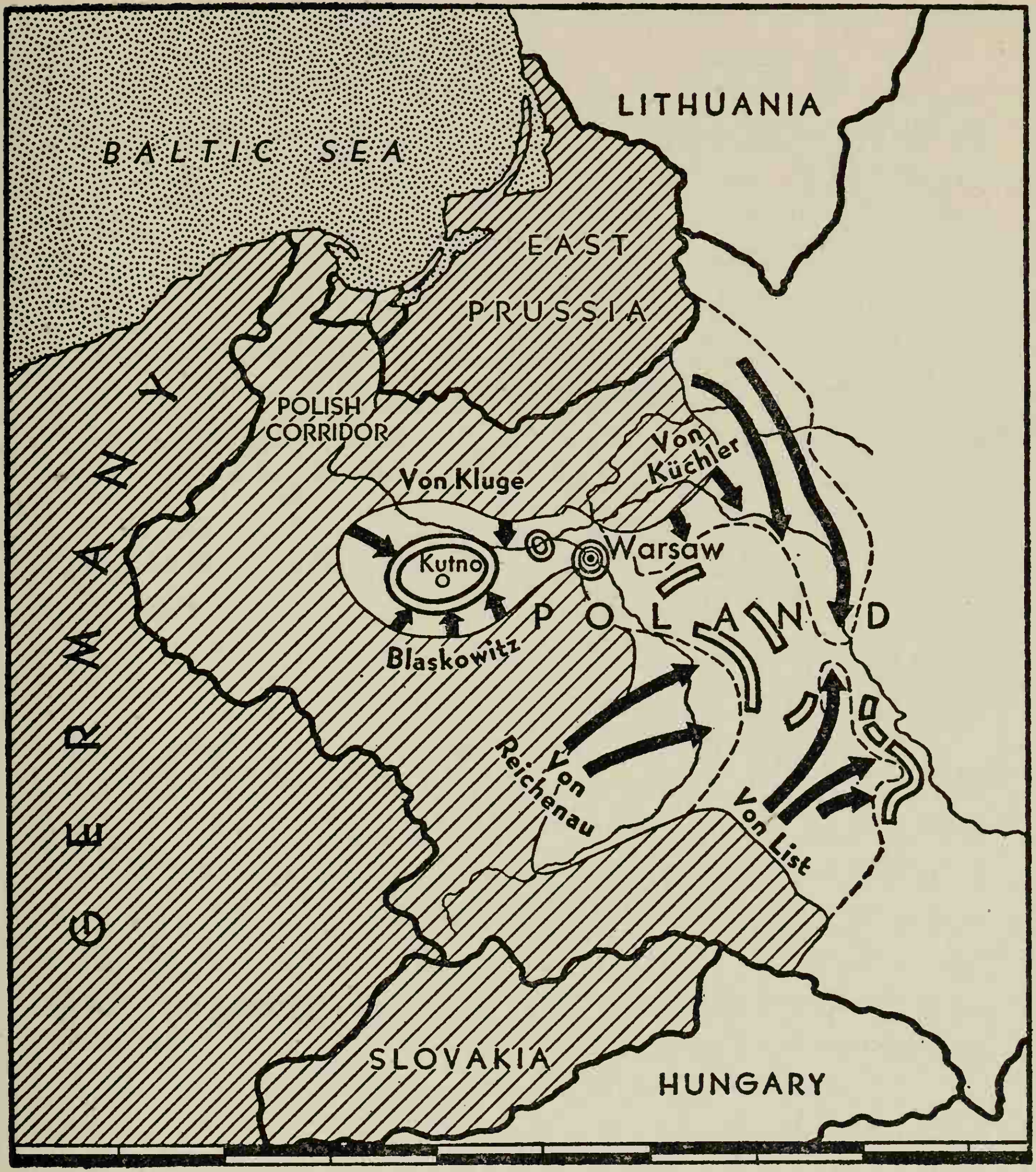


BALTIC SEA
LITHUANIA
EAST PRUSSIA
ARMY GROUP VON BOCK
POLISH CORRIDOR
Von Kluge
Von Küchler
Narew
GERMANY
POSEN ARMY
Vistula
Warsaw
Kutno
POLAND
Radom
Bug
Blaskowitz
Von Reichenau
ARMY GROUP VON RUNDSTEDT
Cracow
Von List
SLOVAKIA
HUNGARY

7. THE POLISH CAMPAIGN, SEPTEMBER 10

By September 17, von List had established contact with von Kückler on the Bug. Von Reichenau faced the right flank of von Kückler's army across the Vistula. Remnants of several Polish forces were trapped in the area surrounded by the three. Warsaw was surrounded by the armies of von Reichenau, von Kückler, and von Kluge (*see* Map 8, p. 37). Three days later the Polish resistance was over except for Warsaw and a few pockets where isolated units fought on. Warsaw, bombed almost out of existence, surrendered on September 28, its radio station broadcasting defiance to the very end, its mayor dying in the final attack. Scattered struggles went on during the mopping up of the Polish forces until October 5. But the campaign was virtually over by September 20; in less than three weeks the German Army had completely destroyed the armed forces of a nation of thirty-five million people. It had achieved its primary objective with almost incredible speed.

Under its agreement with Germany, Russia invaded Poland on September 17. Her excuse for invasion was the pretext that the Polish state, with which she had a nonaggression pact of long standing, was no longer in existence. Since the Polish army was much too broken to offer any effective resistance, the Russian operations can hardly be called a campaign. The net result was a division of Poland between Germany and Russia, the fourth partition in Poland's history. The state of Poland was set up under German protection with its western boundary passing east of Lodz, its northern boundary on the Narew, and its eastern boundary on the Bug. Germany and Russia met on a common frontier between the Narew and the Bug (*see* Map 9, p. 39). Germany's share of the spoils contained the richest and best-developed


LITHUANIA
BALTIC SEA
EAST PRUSSIA
POLISH CORRIDOR
GERMANY
Von Kluge
Von Küchler
Kutno
Warsaw
POLAND
Blaskowitz
Von Reichenau
Von List
SLOVAKIA
HUNGARY

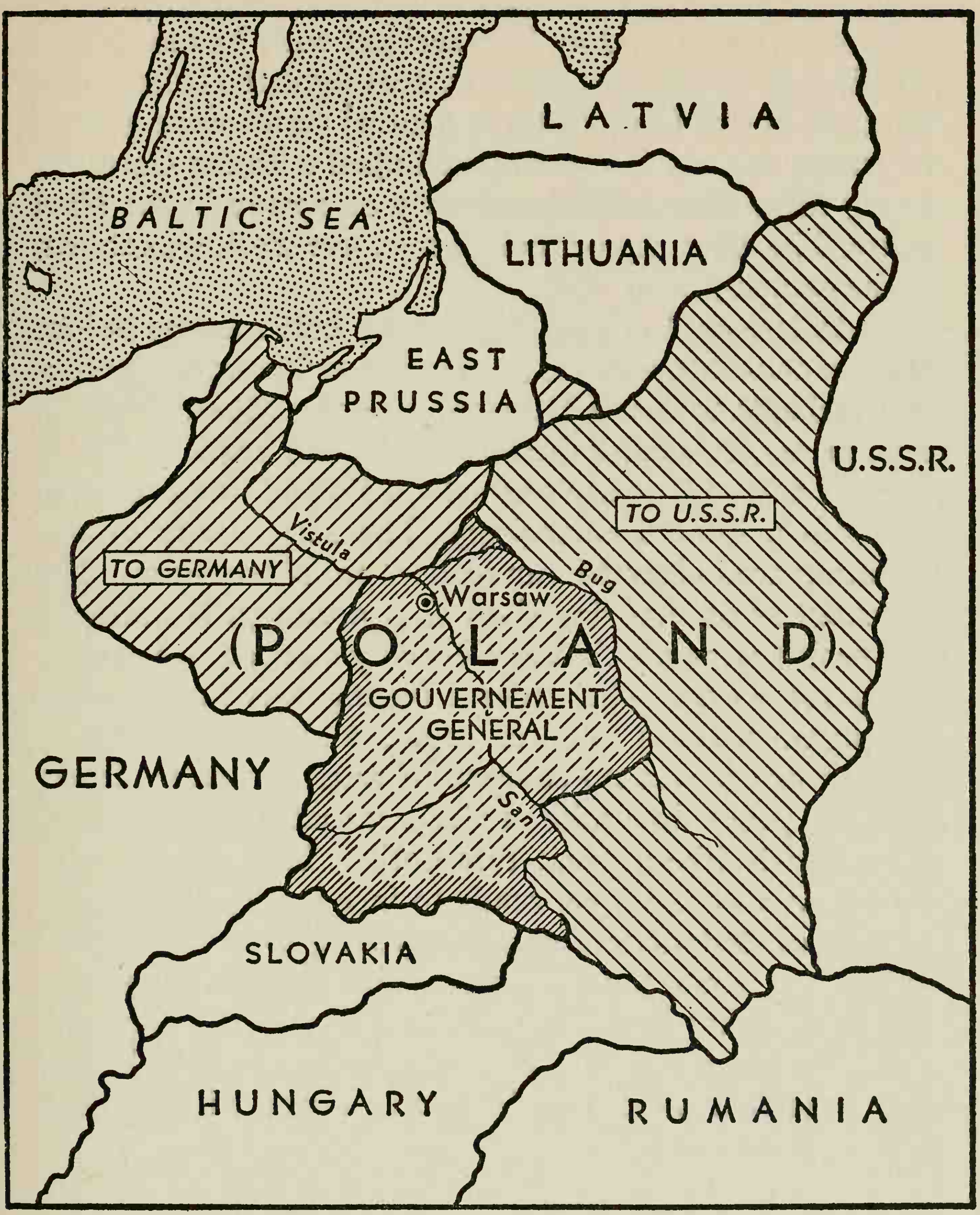
8. THE POLISH CAMPAIGN, SEPTEMBER 17

sections of the country and more than twenty-two millions of its population.

In the campaign in Poland the German army demonstrated the meaning of "blitzkrieg" (lightning war). With a combination of superb training, thorough preparation, and complete co-operation among the components of the striking force, the German army had poured around and through the Polish resistance with deadly efficiency. After less than a week of fighting the Polish defense had degenerated into the piecemeal fighting of scattered armies and smaller units. The totality of Germany's victory is clear from the final statistics. No less than 700,000 Polish soldiers were captured by German units. The total of the Polish dead and wounded had not been released. By contrast, Germany's total casualties were officially set at 45,000, of whom only 10,572 were killed. This was a small price to pay for so smashing a victory.

Although the Polish armies were crushed in less than three weeks, the individual German troop units did not have an easy time. The German accounts indicate that Polish forces were bitter opponents and that the Germans who met them in combat had good cause to respect them. It was only by bringing superior numbers and equipment to bear that the Germans were able to achieve victory in individual actions.

The blitzkrieg in Poland might have been disturbing to the statesmen and peoples of France and Great Britain, but they still felt no fear as to their ability to meet and smash the German attack whenever it came. Hitler offered peace to them in his speech to the Reichstag on October 6, but they refused to accept peace on his terms. Although that same speech promised to respect the neu-


LATVIA
BALTIC SEA
LITHUANIA
EAST PRUSSIA
U.S.S.R.
TO U.S.S.R.
Vistula
TO GERMANY
Bug
Warsaw
(POLAND)
GOUVERNEMENT GENERAL
GERMANY
San
SLOVAKIA
HUNGARY
RUMANIA

9. THE PARTITION OF POLAND

trality of the small European neutrals, fears ran deep in those countries. Only Switzerland with its mountains was in any position to put up a real fight if Hitler chose to attack them. In all of these neutral states were groups of traitorous citizens who were linked with the Germans living there and working covertly or openly in the Nazi cause. The efficiency of their subversive work was shown in the campaigns of 1940.

As late as April 15, four and a half months before the German jump-off on September 1, President Roosevelt had sent to Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini identical messages asking them to pledge ten years of peace. A week after Germany's attack on Poland, the president declared a limited emergency. The seriousness of our situation was clear to our leaders in Washington. The newspapers of that day show that although the American people were shocked at Germany's action, we saw no cause for worry. The general feeling was that Europe had again made a mess of things and must be left to clear it up; it was no concern of ours. Probably fewer than ten people in a million realized that the mess would flow swiftly like a great tide until it beat on our very shores. We were not yet ready to face reality. Two years of war, of destruction beyond anything ever seen before in history, would have to pass before the American people could bring itself to look the facts in the face and meet the danger at last in a way best described by the late President Woodrow Wilson: "Force without stint and without limit."

CHAPTER III

THE SCANDINAVIAN CAMPAIGN

April 9–May 3, 1940

> "None of the Scandinavian statesmen can contend that a request has ever been put to them by the German government or by German public opinion which was incompatible with the sovereignty and integrity of their state."
>
> ADOLF HITLER
> *To the Reichstag,* April 28, 1939

WHEN GERMANY INVADED POLAND on September 1, 1939, the war really began for France and England. They formally declared war on Germany on the third day of September, 1939. But with insufficient equipment, partly trained man power, and no way to reach the Polish fighting front because of the distances involved and because Germany with land armies and naval control of the Baltic barred any possible help, no effective aid could be furnished Poland.

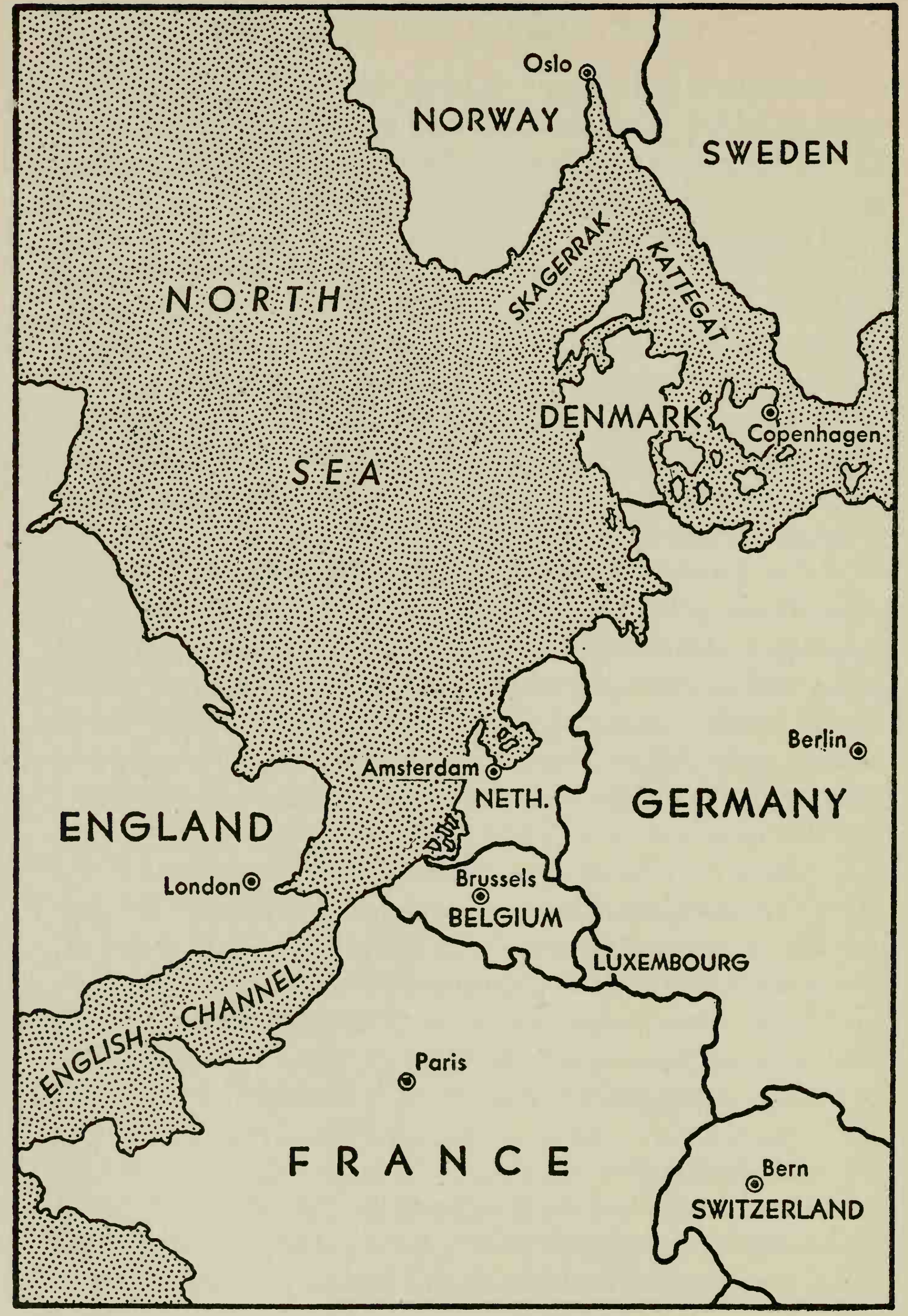
It has been argued that, from the end of the Polish campaign, the French adopted a "fortress complex." They sat down behind the "impregnable" Maginot Line, which began at the Swiss frontier and ended "in the air" at Sedan on the Belgian border. For about half its length it ran north, and then it made a right-angle turn to the west in following the frontier of Luxemburg (*see* Map 13, p. 61). The reasons for not extending it had all sounded good and logical in time of peace: Fortifications cost money and the French people are noted for their thrift. Many Frenchmen considered adequate the fortifications erected by the Belgians along their defense lines. The terrain toward the sea was more adaptable to the less extended fortifications actually constructed there than the Maginot type of fortress. The French were not entirely committed to a war of position on the pattern of the first World War; the northern part of the Maginot Line would serve to protect their rear while they operated beyond it in German terrain that was favorable for maneuver. Nor were they in all probability committed to dependence on German respect for the neutrality of Belgium; but a German drive through the Low Countries might better be met by a fluid rather than by a stationary defense.

After the initial scare and blitzkrieg in Poland, which put armies on the alert in France, England, and the Low Countries, there emerged the inertia characterized by some of the press as a "sitzkrieg." People began to talk about a "phony" war. The natural, human, democratic tendency to avoid the cost of war in blood, treasure, and disruption of the general economy caused the allies to grasp this opportunity to watch and wait. Germany had just about completed her own great fortified line, the Siegfried Line. The peculiar situation in French industry at the beginning of the war did not improve, and production of vital war materials lagged. The Nazi menace seemed more remote with every passing day, the countries of western Europe felt more secure, and lethargy supplanted alertness.

Later events proved this to be either completely a part of the Nazi strategy, or, at best, a development of which the Germans took quick cognizance and full advantage. Their "fifth-column" allies, either natives of the threatened countries or German agents, played a vital part in lulling whole peoples into dreamland security and in winning sympathizers and support in high places in government and military ranks.

At the opening of 1940, Germany faced Great Britain and France in a theater of war which included seven traditionally neutral states of importance to both sides. At the southern end of the common border of France and Germany lay Switzerland. North of France and bordering on Germany lay Belgium and Luxembourg; north of these and still bordering on Germany lay Holland. Belgium and Holland had coasts on the North Sea opposite England. North of Germany, between the North Sea and the Baltic, lay the peninsula of Denmark, her only land contact being with Germany. Across the narrow passage between the two seas lay the Scandinavian peninsula, with Norway on the North Sea and Atlantic coast, and Sweden facing east on the Baltic. Of these seven states, only Belgium had been drawn into the first World War and little unarmed Luxembourg had been overrun by German invaders. The other five had been somewhat helpful to both sides (*see* Map 10, p. 44).

The traditional neutrality of the Scandinavian countries was doomed almost from the beginning of the war. Both Great Britain and Germany needed them as allies. For Germany, control over the Scandinavian peninsula meant a weakening of the British blockade, additional sources of supply, chiefly food, and insurance of the continuation of other supplies. On the military side, such control would give her bases from which to launch air attacks on the north of England and Scotland, and bases from which her naval units could operate directly into the broad reaches of the north Atlantic. Finally, such


Oslo
NORWAY
SWEDEN
NORTH
SEA
SKAGERRAK
KATTEGAT
DENMARK
Copenhagen
Berlin
Amsterdam
NETH.
GERMANY
ENGLAND
London
Brussels
BELGIUM
LUXEMBOURG
ENGLISH CHANNEL
Paris
FRANCE
Bern
SWITZERLAND

10. THE SHORES OF THE NORTH SEA

control would deny both Scandinavian supplies and Scandinavian co-operation to the British.

Defensively, England felt certain that Danish products for her breakfast table would continue to flow; that Norway would continue to furnish her with fish, as well as the means of transporting Swedish iron ore from the Karalin mines in the far north. Offensively, England gave consideration to an alliance with Norway which would seriously hamper the transportation of that same iron ore to Germany and would remove the neutral haven of that long island-protected Norwegian coast so useful to the Nazis. It must be remembered that England sought this end by *negotiation* and *co-operation*—though the plan never emerged from its formative stage.

To Germany, the iron ore from northern Sweden was vital to the continuation of her program of conquest. Her entire industry was geared to this high-grade ore, and any termination of, or any interference with the source of supply would necessitate a disastrous reorganization of her industrial system. There were two routes by which the ore reached Germany. The Baltic route, which began at Loulea in the upper Baltic Sea, is shorter, but is icebound at least four months of the year. The alternate route by rail to Narvik in northwestern Norway, on the ocean, and thence by sea to Germany is a year-round route. During the first year of the war, the strange sight of armed British and German ore boats tied up at the same ore-loading pier in Narvik was a novelty of the period.

The economies of Norway and Denmark were tied to Britain and these two countries were definitely pro-British. Sweden, if not pro-German, at least was not anti-German. All three proclaimed neutrality, and made an honest effort to maintain this policy. Sweden was a prisoner of any strong nation that held the Skagerrak and Kattegat, since the difficult mountain range along her common border with Norway hemmed her in on the west. Norway, with a long coast line on the North Sea and Atlantic Ocean, was weak and was, in addition, internally distressed. Native fifth columnists were numerous and in many cases held high offices of trust. Each of the three Scandinavian countries owned a large merchant marine, but their ships were hostages to British sea power or German torpedoes.

Norway to the Allies meant an advanced base from which aircraft could operate against German industry and German shipping in the Baltic, as well as the stopping of the considerable leak in the blockade. Allied control of Norway would seriously interfere with German heavy industry, since Sweden's iron would no longer be available on a year-round basis. With an overwhelming naval superiority, although lacking sufficient weapons and adequate air power, it was desirable that the Allies move into Norway. The principal deterrent, however, was political. To go in without the consent of the Norwegians would be to become an aggressor in the eyes of the world, in direct contravention of the announced British policy of supporting the rights of smaller nations.

To Germany, the possession of Norway meant a lessening of the stranglehold of the British blockade. It meant an additional eight hundred miles of coast line (approximately the distance from Boston to Savannah on the Atlantic Coast) cut by numerous fjords, which could be used as bases for naval and submarine activity against the Allies. It meant denial of air bases for Allied attacks on Germany, and the provision of such bases for Nazi attacks on Scotland and Allied commerce. The two most important considerations, however, were first, the insurance of continuous supplies of Swedish iron ore through Narvik, and second, shutting off the supply of fish to Britain from Norway. No political or ideological consideration would stand in Germany's way, as past performances had clearly shown.

Denmark was perhaps the victim of necessity. Control of Denmark would close off completely the narrow Skagerrak, the entrance to the Baltic, and control of Denmark would make it easier to hold Norway once that country was conquered.

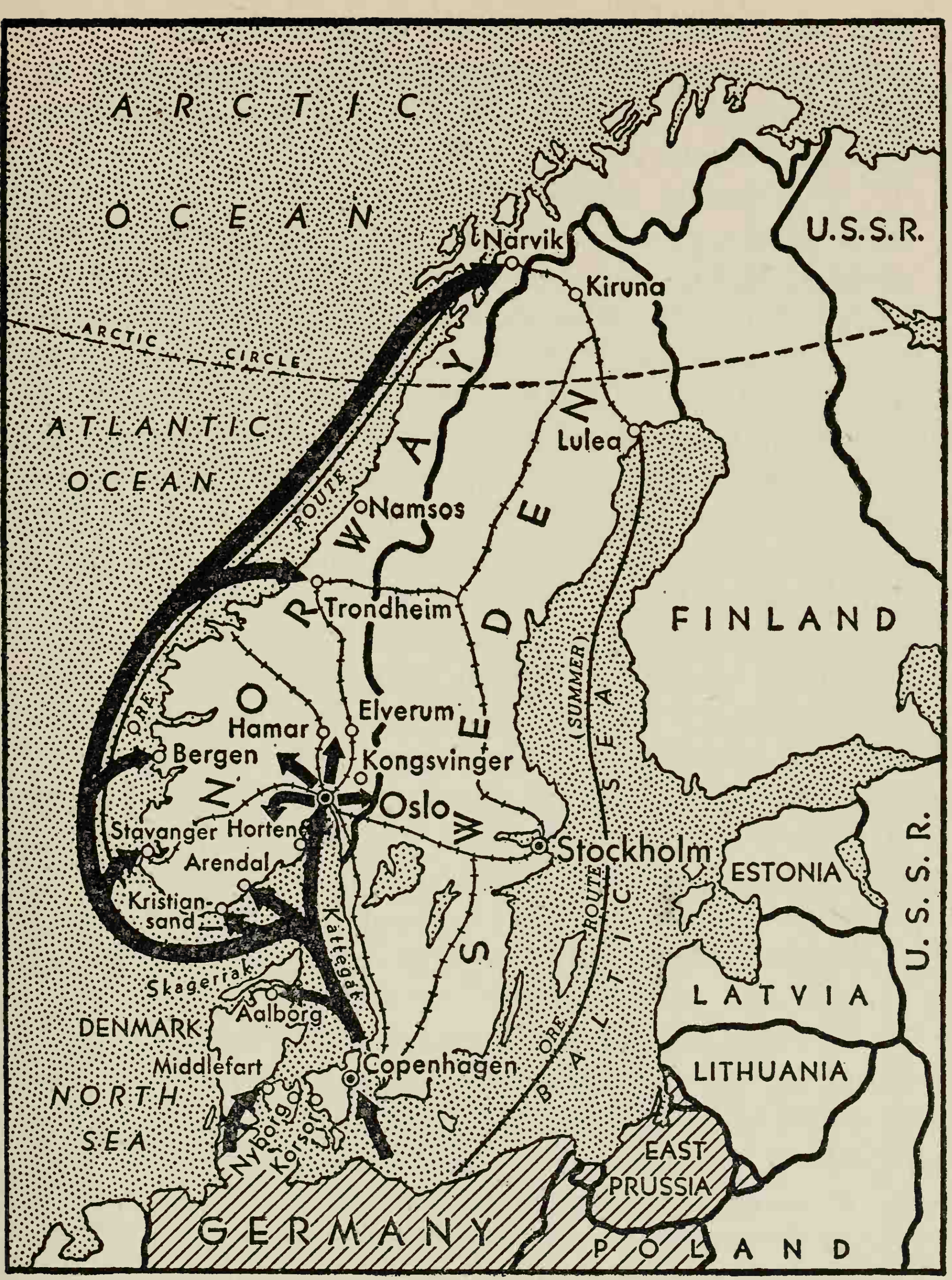
And so, with the fears of the Allies and the smaller countries considerably allayed; with the wishful thinking to remain in the comparatively bloodless, stalemated warfare in the west, lethargy deepened, long weekends socially, and "business as usual" commercially, became the order of the day. All the while, the Allies applied reason and experience in determining Germany's probable moves. On the other hand, Germany was fully informed of all important Allied moves and plans. Quietly she got ready to strike.

So the situation was at the opening of 1940. In the first months of the year Great Britain was negotiating with Norway to conclude an alliance. The negotiations were being conducted in secrecy and doubtless were hampered by the internal dissension in Norway and by the work of the native fifth columnists, who were numerous and some of whom were highly placed in the government. At the same time, Britain was preparing a force to be sent to Norway upon the successful conclusion of the negotiations; she could not enter Norway without Norwegian consent.

Germany was bound by no such necessity for preparation. When the need to occupy Norway became pressing, she readied her expeditionary force in short order by drawing on her immense supply of material and trained man power and by training them in the task they had to perform. When the force was ready, it was sent on its way. This was another example of the advantage resting with Germany by virtue of her long mobilization; she could be ready for any move in shorter time and in better shape than her enemies.

During the latter part of March the Germans increased their air reconnaissance over the Skagerrak and the southern part of Norway. British naval and air units began to operate in the same area. On April 8, a British submarine sank a troop-laden transport off Lillesand in Southern Norway. On the same day the Allies mined the coastal waters around the tip of Norway in order to force German vessels out to sea where British naval units might intercept them.

On April 9, the Germans launched a two-pronged attack on Norway and Denmark. The attack was not a complete surprise to the Danes, for they had observed German activity along the border and in the Kattegat for several days. But they were powerless to meet it with any adequate defense. Mechanized units crossed the Schleswig border from Germany in the early morning and soon overran the entire peninsula of Jutland. Copenhagen, Nieborg, Korsoer, and Middlefahrt were occupied by landing parties from naval units. On the next day the Germans seized the island of Bornholm in the Baltic. By April 11 they were in complete control of


ARCTIC OCEAN
U.S.S.R.
Narvik
Kiruna
ARCTIC CIRCLE
ATLANTIC OCEAN
NORWAY
SWEDEN
Lulea
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ROUTE
Trondheim
FINLAND
(SUMMER)
ORE
Elverum
Hamar
Bergen
Kongsvinger
Oslo
Stavanger
Horten
Arendal
Stockholm
ESTONIA
U.S.S.R.
Kristian-sand
Kattegat
ROUTE
BALTIC SEA
Skagerrak
LATVIA
Aalborg
DENMARK
Middlefart
Copenhagen
ORE
LITHUANIA
NORTH SEA
Nyborg
Korsor
EAST PRUSSIA
GERMANY
POLAND

II. THE INVASION OF NORWAY

Denmark. This swift and uncontested success played no small part in the successful achievement of the more difficult conquest of Norway.

The attack on Norway was launched simultaneously with that on Denmark. There was a certain element of surprise in this plan, for it might well be expected that conquest of the nearer country would be effected first. Actually, however, since the Germans expected no trouble with the Danes, there was no reason why they should wait before striking at Norway. Once Denmark was occupied, the Germans could use it as an intermediate base from which to hold Norway.

Geography and distance were important elements complicating the German plan to occupy Norway. The main effort was directed against Oslo through the Kattegat, away from the British fleet. Lesser efforts progressed against Arendal and Kristiansand on the Skagerrak, as well as against Stavanger, Bergen, Trondheim, and Narvik (*see* Map 11, p. 49). Along the western coast the attack ranged from the southern tip of Norway to points beyond the Arctic Circle. The almost perfect coordination of land, sea, and air operations of the supreme command, under General Von Falkenhorst, left nothing to chance.

Unquestionably, fifth column activities in Norway permitted the Germans to gain the foothold which insured ultimate success. The capture of Oslo gives a good picture of fifth columnist operations. At about 1:30 on the morning of April 9, three Norwegian vessels in Oslo Fjord were informed of the arrival of German warships. The Norwegian commander was ordered not to resist and to put all his men ashore without arms of any kind. A fifth columnist in the naval control base at Oskarsborg, the narrowest part of the fjord, had put the wiring of the electric mines out of commission; the firing of these mines would have destroyed the invading vessels.

But the fifth columnists were not 100 per cent efficient. They apparently forgot the small Norwegian mine layer *Olga Trygvasa*. She opened fire and sank the German cruiser *Emden* and one of the two accompanying submarines before receiving orders to run up a white flag and surrender. German marines then landed unopposed and overpowered the Norwegian sailors in the Horten base (most of whom had been disarmed by their officers' orders). Germany thus secured Norway's most important naval base. At about 4:00 o'clock the same morning, the cruiser *Blucher* slipped serenely into the narrows and advanced directly towards Oskarsborg's powerful guns, which were supposed to have been spiked. The forts opened fire at eight hundred yards and the German cruiser went to the bottom in about five minutes. Nazi bombers, however, soon silenced those batteries.

At dawn, Oslo's three airports were blanketed by German bombers which destroyed Norwegian planes and antiaircraft guns, paving the way for the landing of German troops by transport planes. General Von Falkenhorst landed from the air just in time to lead a parade of fifteen hundred Nazi troops through the capital city of Oslo.

In other ports and military bases, the story was repeated in much the same way. At Trondheim a reinforced Nazi regiment captured the town and forts guarding the harbor entrance without firing a shot. At Bergen, the German landing was likewise unopposed. But when the invaders wanted to march inland, they found a part of the Norwegian army blocking the way. This resistance was broken only after several weeks when German troops from Oslo made a sustained drive on the Norwegian rear. Seven German destroyers assisted troop landings at Narvik by sinking two Norwegian destroyers and two armed British merchant vessels in the harbor. No Norwegian soldier was present to resist the landing of twenty-five hundred Nazi troops. All seven German destroyers were sunk by the British in naval operations in Narvik harbor on April 9 and 11. No resistance was encountered by the German forces which seized Stavanger and Arendal. The fort at Kristiansand sank a Nazi warship before German bombers arrived to silence its guns. By the afternoon of April 9, the Germans were in complete control of all seven ports where they had landed in the morning.

The next German move was to strengthen these footholds. Regular air transport service from Aalborg in Denmark brought reinforcements which were landed at all Norwegian airfields, a steady flow which was never interrupted. On the night of April 10 and 11, a second large force was transported across the Skagerrak, although the British sank several ships in the convoy. Freighters, laden with tanks, armored cars, artillery and ammunition, discharged cargoes in Oslo and returned for more.

On April 12, with three divisions of infantry available, the Germans began to spread out from Oslo. One force moved south along the eastern shore of Oslo Fjord, brushing aside slight resistance from unorganized Norwegian groups. A force of three hundred Norwegians was driven from Holden into Sweden by the German advance. After mopping up all resistance in the southeast tip of Norway the Germans were behind the right flank of the Swedish coast defense to guard against Sweden's unknown attitude.

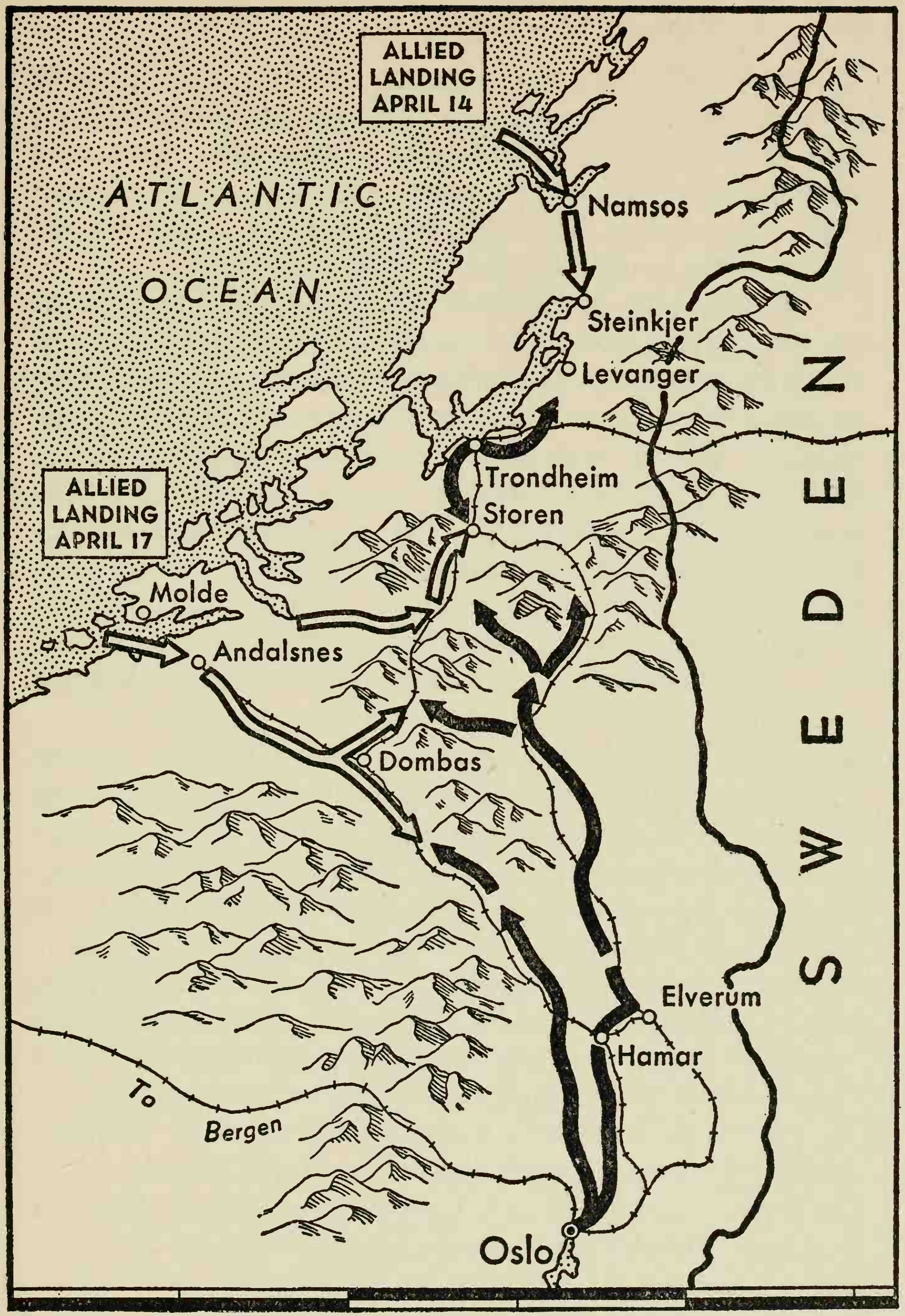
A second Nazi force moved northeast. It met resistance at Skarnes, but was reinforced and succeeded in driving the defenders to positions north of Kongsvinger, which the Germans occupied April 17. Other forces spread out fanlike to the northwest, west, and southwest. Norwegian forces were reorganized to make a stand at Hamar, where King Haakon had gone, and around Elverum. South of these two towns, the Norwegians made their first attempt to organize a line of resistance. This line was held until April 20 when German motorized units, accompanied by tanks and aided by bombers, drove back the defenders and captured the two towns.

It might be noted that the first American soldier in uniform to lose his life in the present war was killed near Hamar. Captain Robert M. Losey, United States Air Corps, the American military observer, was struck by a bomb fragment and killed while he was performing his duty. His death awakened some people in the United States to the possibility that this conflict might not after all be confined to Europe and of no concern to the United States. But most of them passed off the event with the phrase "Accidents will happen," or "A soldier's business is to die for his country."

The next German objective was to tie together the base of operations at Oslo with the occupied ports along the coast. There was no difficulty in joining with forces at Arendal and Kristiansand. The forces at Stavanger and at Bergen were in no immediate danger; at Stavanger reinforcements and light material were brought in by air transport.

Trondheim and Narvik, on the other hand, were situated at great distances from support. Prompt action by the Allies might cut them off and recapture northern Norway. Retention of Trondheim was essential to the Germans, for that city controlled the valleys running south to the Oslo plain and the important railroads connecting Oslo with Sweden. Furthermore, it was the only northern port with facilities adequate for the landing of a large expeditionary force. But Trondheim was even more important to the Allies, for it was the last place where the Allies might establish a base of operations from which to drive the Nazis out of southern Norway. Therefore, although the British continued operations against the ore port of Narvik, they began their major effort in the Trondheim area.

The race for Trondheim began on April 15 when Allied forces landed at Namsos, about one hundred miles north of Trondheim, and at Molde and Andalsnes, an equal distance to the south (*see* Map 12, p. 55). Leading elements of the Namsos force moved south toward Levanger, about fifteen miles north of Trondheim. But these were forced to fall back to positions north of Steinkjer when German forces, assisted by air and naval arms, threatened to annihilate the entire detachment. The Allied troops south of Trondheim, with the aid of Norwegian troops, moved to Dombas and Storen to seize railroad centers and road junctions. But the British efforts were too late, and their forces, with insufficient mechanized equipment and artillery and air support, were too weak. Their inadequate ports were rendered even more useless by German bombers which destroyed the town of Namsos and its piers, ruined harbor facilities at Molde and Andalsnes, and cut communication lines between these ports and the advance elements.


ALLIED LANDING APRIL 14
ATLANTIC
OCEAN
Namsos
Steinkjer
Levanger
Trondheim
Storen
ALLIED LANDING APRIL 17
Molde
Andalsnes
Dombas
SWEDEN
Elverum
Hamar
To Bergen
Oslo

12. THE RACE FOR TRONDHEIM

Without sufficient antiaircraft weapons and pursuit planes, the British were forced to submit to continuous attacks by the unmolested German Luftwaffe. The actual strength of the German forces was not much greater than that of the Allies, but they had the advantage of superior mechanical equipment and air support.

Meanwhile the Germans began to push their forces up the valleys from Oslo to the Trondheim area. By April 20 sufficient tanks and armored cars were available to scatter the Norwegian defenders north of their positions at Hamar and Elverum. Nazi mechanized units, with complete and efficient air support, pushed all resistance before them so rapidly that even their own motorized troops were unable to keep up with the armored vehicles. The British were forced to retreat, and on April 30 they began a withdrawal from Storen and Dombas. By May 2 the evacuation was completed, and Germany's occupation of all southern Norway had been accomplished. The attempt to recapture Narvik had already been given up by the Allies. This ended the blitzkrieg phase of the Norwegian campaign.

The failure of the Allied attempt to relieve Norway is readily explained. The expeditionary forces had to be organized and supplied hastily and then to cross four hundred miles of ocean. At sea, at the debarkation ports, and in operations they were subjected to constant attack by the powerful German Luftwaffe, unopposed because the Allied air force had no adequate landing fields in Norway. Once contact was established with German troops, it was all too apparent that the ill-prepared expeditionary forces were meeting a most carefully planned and executed German attack. The smoothness and precision of all German movements in Norway testified to the efficiency of the staff's careful preparations, including provision against all possible contingencies.

The occupation of Denmark and Norway gave Germany many specific advantages. She obtained for herself further supplies, especially food from Danish farms and Norwegian fisheries, and raw materials which had been going almost exclusively to Britain. She was able to dominate Sweden completely, with an economic if not a political control. She acquired bases close to British waters, bases from which she could intensify her air and submarine attack on British naval and merchant ships; with these operations she was able to weaken the British blockade of the Reich at the same time that she was strengthening her counterblockade against Great Britain. And finally, her successful action against these neutrals were a distinct discouragement to other small nations who were inclined to side with the Allies.

Norway had remained a neutral through the first World War, even at great cost to her merchant marine. But Norway was the first of the neutrals to fall before Nazi ruthlessness in the present conflict. The fifth columnist activity which paved the way for that conquest has made the name of Quisling an international synonym for traitor. The brave men and women of Norway, however, have set an international example for the resistance against overwhelming odds. Their home occupied by the oppressor, all Norwegians at home and abroad continue a gallant fight for freedom.

CHAPTER IV

THE FALL OF FRANCE

May 10–June 25, 1940

> Germany has no interests in the west, and our western wall is for all time the frontier of the Reich on the west. Moreover, we have no aims of any kind there for the future. With this assurance we are in solemn earnest.
>
> Adolph Hitler
> *To the Reichstag,* September 1, 1939

After the fall of norway, the remaining small countries of Europe began to wonder whose number would come up next. Many experts believed that Hitler's armies would move to the southeast in the next phase of their campaign of conquest. Others believed that, in spite of his continued protestations of benevolent intentions, Hitler would move westward. Although both Holland and Belgium had preserved a strict neutrality up to this time, they intensified their preparations for the attack which seemed inevitable.

Holland is about the size of the state of Maryland. The land is low and flat, partially below sea level, much of it reclaimed swamp and marshland. It is crisscrossed by numerous canals which serve for both transportation and drainage; the area below sea level is hemmed in with dikes. The whole country is rich with farms; good dairy farms and intensely cultivated truck farms are frequent.

The Dutch prepared for a defensive war, a war which they knew must end in defeat unless help came quickly from France and Great Britain. Their army was small, but it was well trained and had high morale; however, it had neither the air power nor the mechanical equipment to offer continued resistance to the highly trained Nazi war machine. Hence they determined to flood wide areas of their country just deep enough to stop vehicles but not deep enough to float barges. Bridges were mined, and concrete pillboxes were built on the approaches. The inner lines were guarded by barbed wire, and the roadside trees were mined to form road blocks. Behind their flooded areas and their blocked roads the Dutch planned to hold out until help came from the rear.

Belgium was approximately the same size as Holland, but unlike Holland she was a great industrial country. Germany's war industries were expanded to the bursting point, and the industrial power of Belgium could make a great contribution to the German war effort. Bases in Belgium, and in Holland, would be ideal for the raiding of either England or Germany; Hitler wanted to protect his country and aid its offensive against Great Britain at the same time.

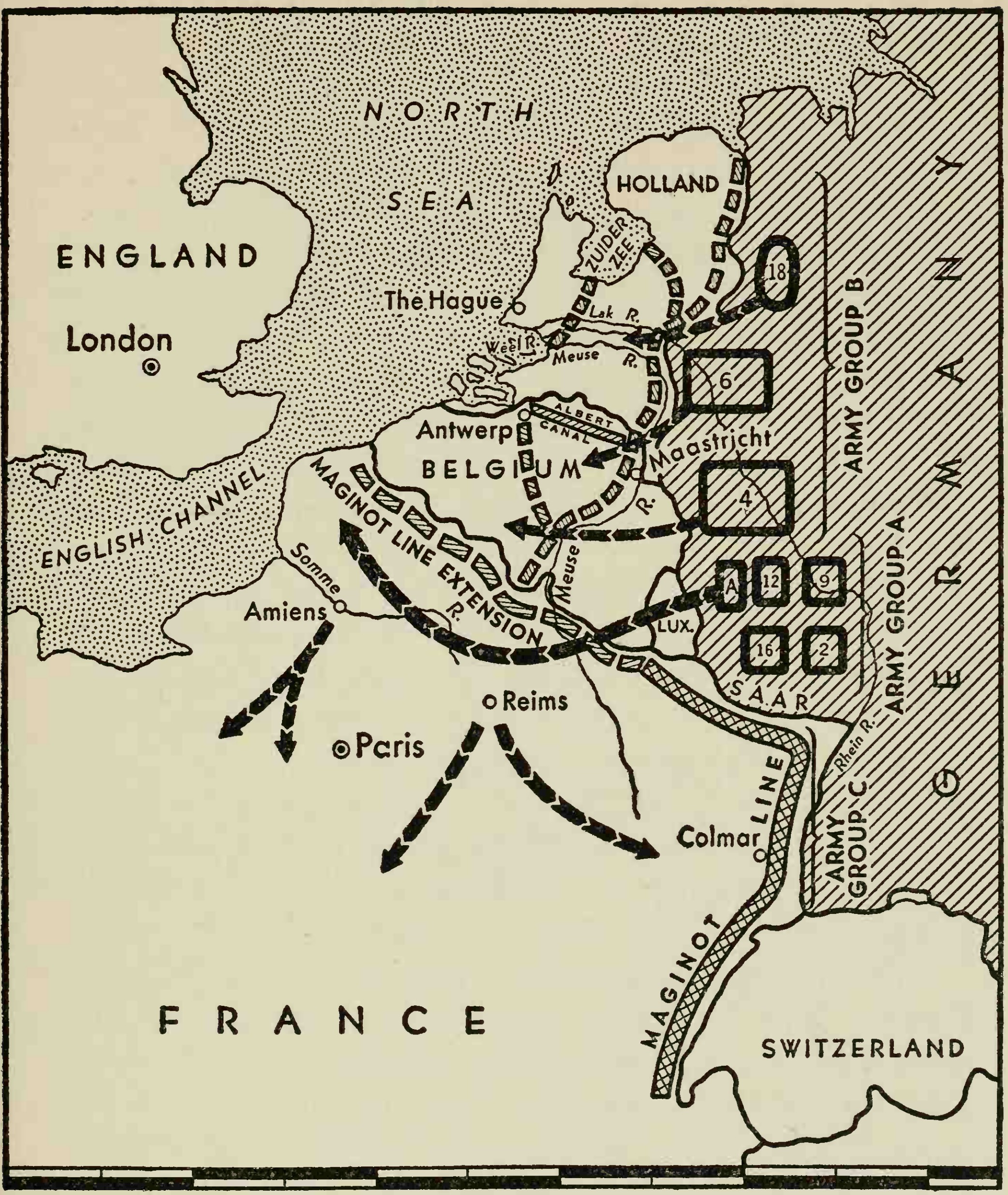
The Belgian army numbered about six hundred and fifty thousand, but the air force was small and totally incapable of competing with the Luftwaffe. The Belgians had prepared a series of defensive positions, but their ultimate hope of self-preservation lay in the speed with which aid could be furnished by the Allies; they could not hope to hold their lines against the might of the German army.

The Grand Duchy of Luxembourg was a small country of a few hundred square miles, rich in coal, in iron ore, and in the industrial facilities for the utilization of these. In addition to this attractive wealth, Luxembourg was in the unenviable position of being in the path of the direct route from Germany to France. The Grand Duchy had never maintained an army; her only possible resistance could be a formal protest against an invasion which violated international law. Under the "new order"—the rule of armed force—such protests have become almost valueless.

The German reasons for attacking Holland, Belgium, and Luxembourg were all too obvious. The Nazi army could replenish its resources of food, raw materials, manufactured goods, tools, and equipment. It could obtain better approaches to both France and England. And it would deny the Allies the use of advanced bases in these countries from which to attack Germany, even if the Allies had been willing to violate the neutrality of the Low Countries. The reasons for the German move were almost exactly the same as those for the Scandinavian campaign of April.

Since the beginning of the war the French and British had been in position along the eastern frontier of France. Belgium's strict adherence to her neutrality had prevented the drawing up of detailed joint defense plans between Belgium and the Allies; but after the beginning of 1940 the Belgians were less hostile (*see* Note 3, p. 254). The French and British made plans for the movement of troops into Belgium when the invasion came, to take up positions along the Dyle River on the second line of Belgian defense (*see* Map 13, p. 61). These troops would pivot on Revin and would be in their positions before the Germans broke through the first line of Belgian defense.

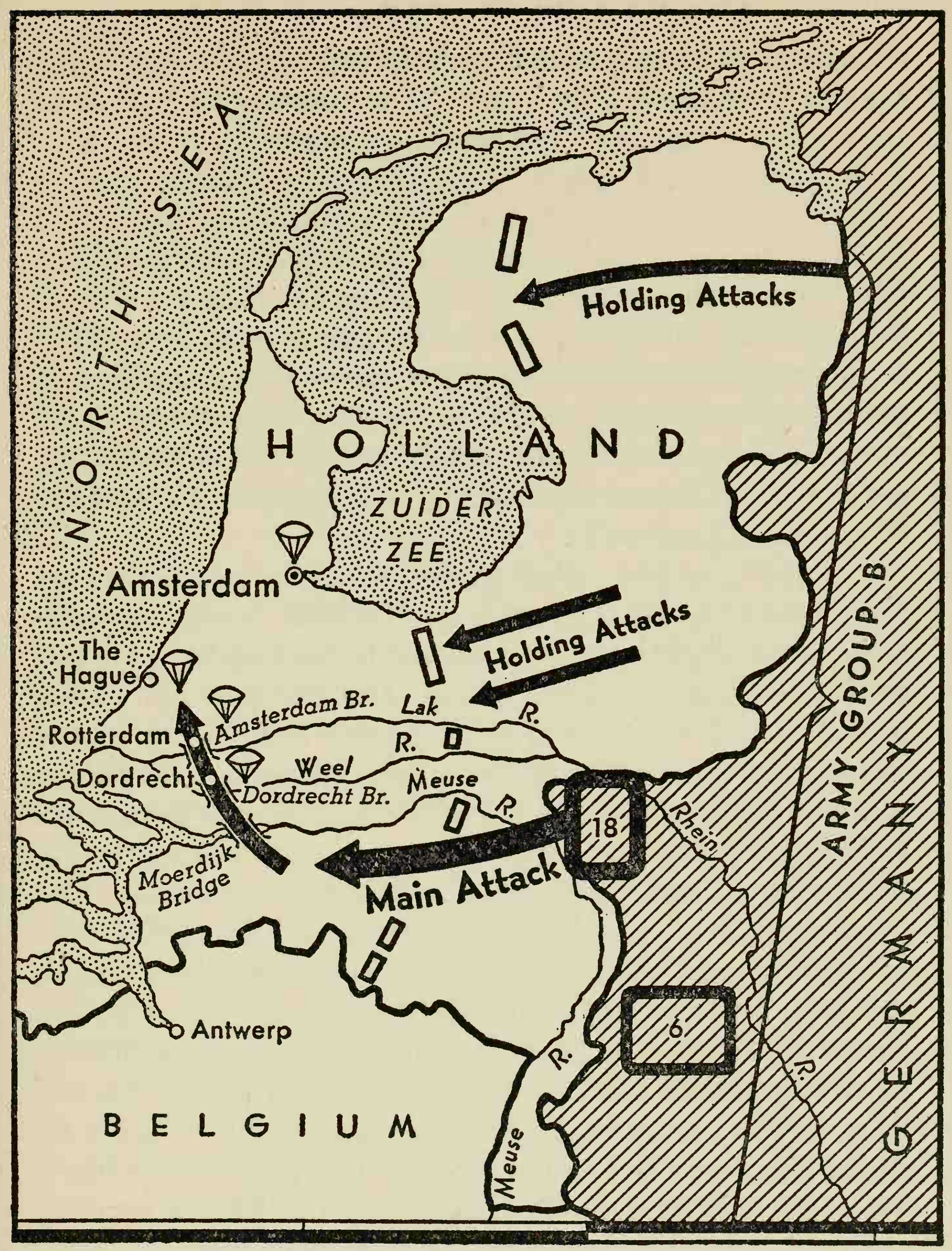
On the evening of May 9, Hitler gave his solemn


NORTH
SEA
HOLLAND
ZUIDER ZEE
ENGLAND
London
The Hague
Lek R.
Weel R.
Meuse R.
ALBERT CANAL
Antwerp
BELGIUM
Maastricht
R.
Meuse
18
6
4
A
12
9
16
2
ARMY GROUP B
ARMY GROUP A
ARMY GROUP C
GERMANY
ENGLISH CHANNEL
MAGINOT LINE EXTENSION
Somme R.
Amiens
LUX.
SAAR
Reims
Paris
Rhein R.
Colmar
MAGINOT LINE
FRANCE
SWITZERLAND

13. THE PLAN OF ATTACK

pledge that Germany had no intention of attacking her small neighbors. Six hours later his armies moved into Holland, Luxembourg, and Belgium. The German general staff had made its usual thorough study of the situation and of the contingencies attendant on all movements. The Maginot Line could be pierced only after a heavy assault. The move through the Low Countries along the general line of the von Schlieffen plan of the first World War, a broad sweep across the north of France swinging down west of Paris, might be as unsuccessful as it was obvious. It had failed in 1914. The weak point in the French defenses lay around Sedan, opposite the Forest of Ardennes, above the end of the main part of the Maginot Line. The French considered the Forest of Ardennes to be unfavorable to the operation of motorized equipment; they felt secure in the belief that if a German move should come through that sector, they would have time to meet it on the natural defensive line of the Meuse River with adequate reinforcements. Hence, the main effort of the German advance was pointed through Luxembourg and the Ardennes while a group of three armies attacked Holland and Belgium at the same time (*see* Map 13, p. 61).

In Holland the German attack followed the familiar pattern. The Luftwaffe bombed out the airports, and parachute troops captured the landing fields at Rotterdam, Dordrecht, and Amsterdam. The parachute attack on the Hague was a complete failure; the Dutch rounded up the parachute troops landing on nearby airdromes and virtually annihilated them. While motorized and foot units were crossing the border, air-borne infantry in large transport planes landed on the captured airfields (*see* Map 14, p. 63). The Germans living in Holland,


NORTH SEA
HOLLAND
ZUIDER ZEE
Holding Attacks
Holding Attacks
Amsterdam
The Hague
Rotterdam
Dordrecht
Amsterdam Br.
Lak R.
R.
Weel
Meuse R.
Dordrecht Br.
Moerdijk Bridge
Main Attack
18
Rhein
6
R.
Meuse R.
Antwerp
BELGIUM
ARMY GROUP B
GERMANY

14. THE ATTACK ON HOLLAND

who had not been rounded up before the crisis, and other fifth columnists did their part. They served as guides to strategic points, kept many of the mined bridges from being blown up, and helped to prevent the planned flooding of strategic areas. Where the flooding operation had been carried out, the Germans used shallow-draft rubber boats which they inflated on the spot. On May 13, Queen Wilhelmina and some of her ministers were compelled to flee to England, and the Dutch army was compelled to surrender on May 14. The same day, a bombing force from the Luftwaffe completely razed the nonmilitary center of the city of Rotterdam, an area comprising more than two square miles.

King Leopold called on the Allies for aid within an hour of the German attack on Belgium. They immediately started their troops forward to take up the planned positions along the Dyle River. The German Air Force quickly smothered the Belgian planes and disrupted the rear areas, making communications difficult. The enemy from within, the fifth columnists, assisted parachute troops to seize strategic points, to prevent strategic demolitions, and to destroy communication lines. The important bridge across the Meuse at Maastricht was captured, and two other bridges across the Albert Canal, the first defense line of the Belgians, were taken by the invading Germans. A well-rehearsed combined attack of dive bombers, parachute troops, and specially trained foot troops (most of them combat engineers armed with flame throwers and the means for demolitions) reduced Fort Eben Emael at the junction of the Meuse and the Albert Canal. The apparent ease with which the Germans carried this difficult fortress gave rise to the rumor that they had used "nerve gas," a strange new weapon.

The German advance was so fast that the Belgians had to fall back on the line along the Dyle from Antwerp to Louvain on May 12.

Meanwhile the main German effort was directed through Luxembourg and the Ardennes at Sedan. East of Luxembourg the Germans had concentrated one group of mechanized units under General von Kleist to lead the march into France. Behind them was a strong group of four armies under the command of General von Rundstedt. The group under von Kleist jumped off at dawn on May 10, probably moving two corps abreast, and by that evening had passed through Luxembourg and the first Belgian defenses into the Ardennes. On the next day their advance was opposed by units of the French cavalry and by road blocks. The French high command was immediately informed of the German drive and began the movement of troops to the Meuse in accordance with their plan for its defense; the first of these units was to arrive on May 14 and the last elements were to arrive three days later. The Germans began the Meuse attack on the morning of May 13 and by evening there were German forces on the west bank of the river. The break-through at Sedan was begun.

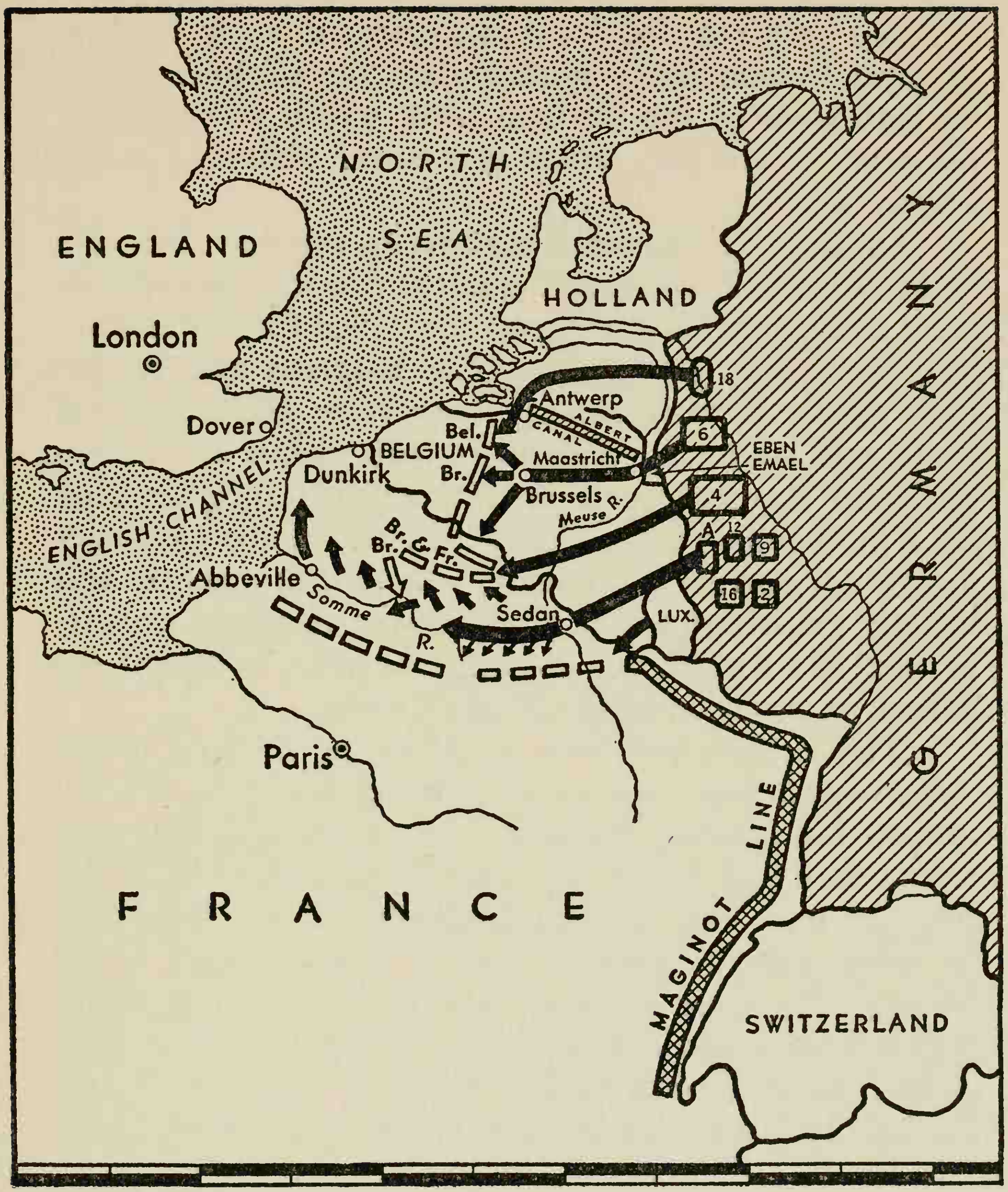
On May 14 the bridgeheads on the Meuse were developed against strengthening opposition, while the northern part of the front remained fast. On the next day the French began to rush troops into the gap and to prepare for counterattacking. At the same time, the northern front began to fall back under assaults. The von Kleist group kept on the march to the west, the von Rundstedt group followed closely in its path, and the French counterattack failed to materialize.

At this point the German plan became clear. At the outset of the campaign the German army had the choice of driving west to the sea or south through France. The high command had decided to perform these operations successively. The group of armies operating through Holland and Belgium under General von Bock was to drive straight west to the sea. Part of von Rundstedt's group was to follow von Kleist's lead in the drive through the Allied center and around its rear. The remainder of that group was to face south and hold the line of their drive, thus preventing a counterattack from pinching off the spearhead of the advance. This plan would divide the Allied forces, encircle the northern part and destroy it, and then deal with the southern part in due time. The first phase developed into the Battle of Flanders; the second into the Battle of France.

Throughout the operations of the von Kleist and von Bock groups the Luftwaffe worked in closest co-operation with the ground troops. Its main function was that of a highly mobile artillery, attacking all points of resistance in the path of the advancing units. It also functioned as long-range artillery, bombing the points of concentration of reserves.

By May 18 the situation of the Allies was badly disorganized. The northern sector was being rapidly surrounded and kept from contact with its units south of the German advance. Refugees were crowding the roads, and fifth columnists among them were encouraging their flight in order to block the roads to the military traffic of reinforcements.

On May 19 the French government announced that General Gustav Gamelin, commander in chief of the Allied land forces, had been relieved of his command. He was replaced by General Maxim Weygand, who had


NORTH
SEA
ENGLAND
London
Dover
HOLLAND
Antwerp
ALBERT
CANAL
18
6
EBEN
EMAEL
4
Bel.
BELGIUM
Dunkirk
Br.
Maastricht
Brussels
Meuse R.
ENGLISH CHANNEL
Br. G.
Br.
Fr.
A
12
9
16
2
Abbeville
Somme
R.
Sedan
LUX.
Paris
GERMANY
MAGINOT LINE
FRANCE
SWITZERLAND

15. BATTLE OF FLANDERS, MAY 21

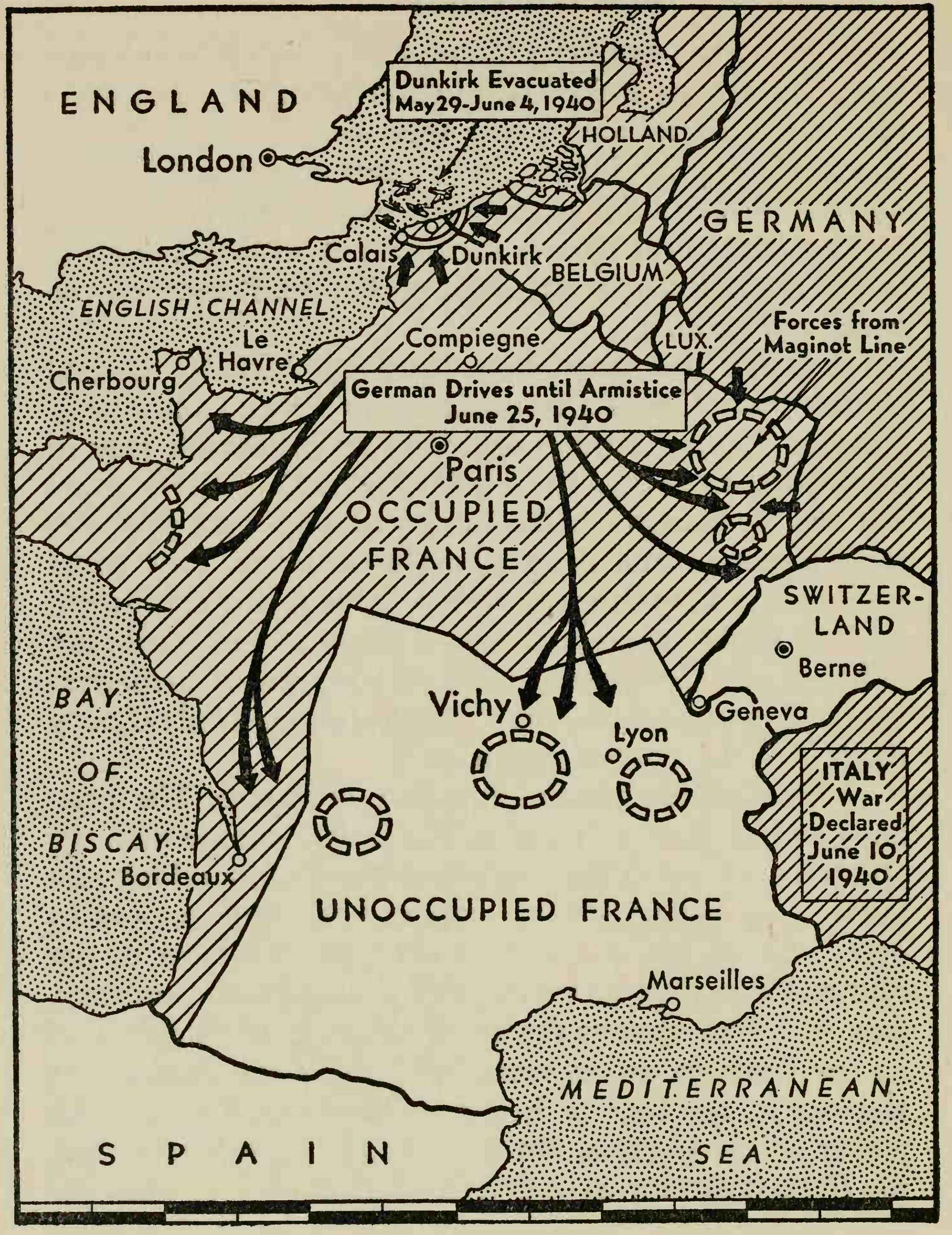
been successor to Foch as chief of the French armies and had been recalled from retirement in 1939. General Weygand immediately started plans for a counterattack on both sides of the German force which was dividing his armies. But this attack was never delivered in effective force.

On May 21 the von Kleist group reached Abbeville on the Channel and turned north and east. The encirclement of the northern sector of the Allied force was complete (*see* Map 15, p. 67). The Belgians and British were under tremendous pressure from both east and south and were compelled to retreat. Calais fell to von Kleist on May 27 after a determined resistance. On May 28, King Leopold surrendered the Belgian army in order to prevent further bloodshed; although this action was bitterly criticized at the time, it was certainly no surprise to the British and French who were aware of the desperate situation of the Belgian army.

The British had been withdrawing in good order, not so much because they were being beaten by frontal attacks but because the situations on their flanks, over which they had no control, kept forcing them back. On May 29 they had reached Dunkirk and the beginning of what was the greatest escape from disaster in all history. The lines stiffened and held while the troops began their embarkation from the beaches. The British Admiralty had assembled a "small vessels pool" which literally built a bridge of boats across the English Channel. The R.A.F., operating from home bases in the south of England, attacked the Luftwaffe with unbridled ferocity and succeeded in maintaining air superiority for the entire time of evacuation. The troops defending the lines repelled every attack. For a week the evacuation went on. Every available plane was in the air over Dunkirk. The troops embarked in good order, at times beating off an enemy attack and then swimming out to the waiting boats. By June 4 the job was completed. Britain had saved the major part of her expeditionary force as well as most of the French and Belgian units left fighting in the area. But she left most of her equipment on the beach at Dunkirk.

During the evacuation from Dunkirk the second phase of the German campaign was already beginning. General Weygand was faced with an impossible task in attempting to defend the whole of France with the units left at his command. Three enemy attacks were possible; the Germans could drive straight on Paris, they could encircle the French army with a drive to the southwest, or they could separate it with a drive to the southeast. Without any fortifications and with his ability to maneuver badly hampered, General Weygand could only occupy the line of the Somme and wait.

The German attack came in two phases. The first, launched on June 5, began on the lower Somme with the objective of sweeping down the coast and taking the ports. The second phase, launched on June 9, was to drive east of Paris and take the Maginot Line in the rear at the same time that a third attack, from Germany, was launched against the front of the Line. Until June 12 the German drives were held up by the French resistance in the face of heavy odds. After that day the power of the German blows proved to be too great and the French armies were driven southward (*see* Map 16, p. 70). On June 10, Mussolini had declared that Italy was in the war, but even the belated attack of the Italian troops had little effect on the situation. The Reynaud


ENGLAND
London
Dunkirk Evacuated May 29-June 4, 1940
HOLLAND
GERMANY
Calais
Dunkirk
BELGIUM
ENGLISH CHANNEL
Le Havre
Cherbourg
Compiegne
LUX.
Forces from Maginot Line
German Drives until Armistice June 25, 1940
Paris
OCCUPIED FRANCE
SWITZERLAND
Berne
Geneva
Vichy
Lyon
ITALY War Declared June 10, 1940
BAY OF BISCAY
Bordeaux
UNOCCUPIED FRANCE
Marseilles
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
SPAIN

16. BATTLE OF FRANCE

government resigned on June 16, and Marshal Pétain became the premier of France. He immediately requested an armistice.

The victorious Hitler, with a flair for the dramatic which is part of his character as *Der Fuehrer,* stipulated that the armistice be signed in the same railway car that held the signing of the armistice ending the first World War. Germany and France came to terms on June 22, but it was not until two days later that France and Italy made their settlement. Hostilities were ended at 1:35 A. M. on June 24. The blitzkrieg had rolled over France in forty-five days.

The complete German success in France was the result of many factors. First among these was the power of the German army and its ability to sustain its drive to the final objective. Second was the disadvantage under which the Allies operated after the campaign developed. Third was the inferior equipment and training of the Allied armies. Fourth was the disadvantage of coalition war. There were other factors as well, but these are the most important.

The German plan was a beautifully simple one. The attack was to be made on a wide front with the main effort on the left flank. The striking force at that point was made strong enough to effect a major break-through and then to protect the left flank while the northern part of the divided armies was encircled and defeated. With this accomplished, the German line was to face south and defeat the remaining forces with a double flanking attack.

In its last drive of the first World War, in 1918, the German armies had achieved a major break-through, but they had been unable to follow up their advantage.

They had insufficient mobile forces to exploit their success, their supporting artillery could not keep up with the advancing attack, and they were unable to supply their extending lines. In the campaign of 1940 the Germans had corrected all of these difficulties. Their armored forces were able not only to act as the spearhead for the break-through but also to exploit the success achieved; these were immediately followed by motorized infantry and foot troops to hold the gains. The close co-operation of the Luftwaffe not only furnished mobile artillery support, but also ranged ahead of the attack to disrupt communications and the reserves being assembled to meet it. The infantry had heavy weapons of its own for artillery support. The motorized supply train solved the problem of supplying a fast-moving attack; and air-borne supplies were used at points where the motor train could not reach. The co-ordination between all elements of the attack was complete, the result of intensive training and rehearsal.

The Allied plan for meeting the German attack was a good one except for one major deficiency. There was apparently no provision for a central body of reserves to be used to strengthen a heavily attacked portion of the line. The possibility of an attack in force near Sedan had been foreseen, but the troops to be moved to meet it were to be in position only after two to six days; this fact indicated that they were at some distance from the danger point. It has been said that the Allied move to occupy the line of the Dyle River in Belgium was a mistake, that the Allies should have remained in their positions on the Belgian border. As the attack developed, this latter plan would probably have had no effect on the outcome. The northern part of the Allied line in Belgium held in good order until it was threatened from the flank; it had been pushed back only fifty miles in fifteen days of fighting.

After May 13 the Allies were fighting at a considerable disadvantage. The deepening German salient west of Sedan made communication between the two sectors of the Allied defense increasingly difficult. The counterattack against the salient called for drives from both north and south; but German pressure in the north made it impossible for those forces to face south, and the southern forces could not muster enough strength for the effort. Even if the counterattack had been launched, the infantry of the von Rundstedt group, marching thirty miles a day, would probably have destroyed the attack by their powerful onrush. The importance of these heavy divisions of German infantry with horse-drawn artillery has perhaps been overlooked in the popularized accounts of the German successes. With the passage of the days the situation grew steadily worse, and the Allies never had a chance to accomplish more than a determined resistance in retreat.

At the time of the German attack, the French, British, and Belgians had some forty-five active infantry divisions, ten cavalry divisions, and six partially trained and partially equipped armored divisions available to meet the drive. With these was a force of about fifty divisions of partially trained reservists. The French had thirteen fortress divisions but these did not figure in the fighting until the end of the campaign. Against these Germany was able to throw about one hundred and fifty divisions, about twelve of which were armored divisions. The total Allied air force consisted of about fifteen hundred planes, many of them obsolescent. The planes of the

Bomber and Fighter Commands based in England were theoretically available for missions on the Continent, but their co-operation was not close until Dunkirk. Against these Germany was able to launch over thirty-six hundred planes. The Allies had incomplete antitank and antiaircraft equipment and were therefore unprepared for the type of attack launched by the Germans. The mobilization of the Allies had been delayed so long that few of the troops were trained for a war of movement.

Finally, the Allies were operating under the considerable disadvantage of coalition war without adequate liaison between the various armies. There were almost certainly no adequate staff talks between the Dutch and Belgian commands and the Allied commands prior to the invasion. The British Expeditionary Force under the command of Lord Gort was theoretically under the command of General Gamelin, but actually it operated under the command of General Georges, commander of the northern theater. The British had only one-sixth of the strength of the French force; and the French, under the influence of German propaganda, tended toward a feeling that they were fighting for the British. Co-operation between the air force of the B.E.F. and the ground troops of the French was neither close nor efficient. In short, where complete co-ordination of all the forces of all of the Allies was vital, there was a definite lack of co-operation.

In ten months the German army had waged three victorious campaigns. In about ninety days of actual fighting it had defeated six countries, two of them with armies considered among the best in Europe. In each campaign the Germans had shown overwhelming power and extreme adaptability to changing situations. They had thoroughly demonstrated their technique of lightning warfare. To the casual observer they seemed almost invincible.

Actually, the achievements of the German army were not miraculous, were nothing that could not be achieved by any other army with the same training and equipment. On the face of it, that may sound like a fatuous statement. But the concept of German invincibility has been broadcast so widely, particularly by agents and friends of the Axis, that it is well to analyze briefly the reasons for its apparent existence. Those reasons can be reduced to three: men, training, and equipment. The assumption can be safely made that Germans are not basically superior to Frenchmen or Britons or Belgians. Therefore, the German superiority in war must be based on superior training and equipment.

Armies are not made overnight. The German youth has been schooled, since 1933, in the idea that to fight for the Fatherland is the highest mission in life. All of them get military training and indoctrination along with their formal education. Since 1933 the German army has been in the process of mobilization, whether openly as the regular army or covertly in the guise of Storm Troopers. Since about 1936 the German army, both regular and reserve, had been engaging in extensive maneuvers which anticipated its actual movements in war. The concept of teamwork is thoroughly carried out in every phase of German training; every soldier knows exactly what he is to do under every circumstance. For specific missions the soldiers are given specific training in dress rehearsals; the landing operations in Norway, the taking of Eben Emael, the passage of the Ardennes, were all familiar operations by the time they actually took place.

Above the training of the individual soldiers and their units there was extensive staff training. From the staff of the high command down through the staffs of all subordinate units, there was the most thorough preparation for every eventuality. A staff officer in the German army, even in peacetime, never makes the same mistake twice; after the first mistake he leaves the staff to think it over elsewhere. Every staff officer is completely familiar with the functions and capabilities of the various arms and services; when a German staff plans an operation, every part of that operation will function on schedule.

The Germans have no new or secret weapons; they only have more weapons than the Allies have been able to bring against them. The program of "guns before butter" has been going on in Germany since 1933. They have had to build an entirely new army from nothing, and they have had no holdovers from previous wars to get in the way of their program. They have adopted the principle of mechanization insofar as it is efficient, but they have still retained large elements of marching infantry and horse-drawn artillery and trains to supplement their faster-moving elements. Much of their development of equipment has been along lines laid down by other countries; both their dive-bombing and tank tactics were originated in the United States. Part of the training of German troops is, of course, thorough training in all types of weapons. German equipment was superior to that of the Allies because the Germans had about five years' head start in assembling it. But none of it was of the nature of a "new weapon." In their first campaigns the Germans had a greater quantity of equipment than the Allies. In the long run, the United Nations can produce much more equipment, and better equipment, than Germany can.

With their superiority in training and equipment, the Germans always had the additional advantage of the initiative. They assembled huge forces at strategic points and then launched the attacks; the Allies had to improvise the defense after the attack developed. In countless instances, in small actions in Poland, before Elverum in Norway, at Dunkirk in France, the Germans were fought to a standstill until they brought up reinforcements in overwhelming numbers. These certainly showed that the German army was not invincible. In Libya and Russia in 1941, the training and equipment of the Germans was matched, and the initiative was taken away from them. And so was their invincibility.

But during the spring of 1940 these things had not yet come to pass. France was defeated and part of her territory was occupied. German boots beat the pavement under the Arc de Triomphe. Great Britain was left alone against the German drive toward conquest.

Meanwhile our Congress had almost doubled the size of our regular army. A bill for selective service to train an army was introduced. Forty billions of dollars were appropriated for the construction of a two-ocean navy. The president called for the production of fifty thousand planes a year. All of this was accomplished during the forty-five historic days of the Battles of Flanders and France. The United States was rapidly awaking to the grave emergency across the narrowing Atlantic.

CHAPTER V

THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

July–November, 1940

> From Britain I now hear only a single cry—the cry, not of the people but of the politicians—that the war must go on. . . . It almost causes me pain to think that I should have been selected by Fate to deal the final blow to the structure that these men have already set tottering.
>
> ADOLF HITLER
> *To the Reichstag,* July 19, 1940

ON JUNE 18, 1940, not many weeks after he was called to his high office, Britain's dynamic Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, declared in the House of Commons: "The Battle of Britain is about to begin. On this battle depends the survival of Christian civilization." And with grim significance he added, "Hitler knows he will have to break us in this island or lose the war."

Less than a month later the historic Battle of Britain began. Its several stages lasted more than three months. But Hitler did not break the British people in their island. Today, over a year and a half later, the democratic way of life is more firmly entrenched in the world's great democracies than ever before.

It may be that future historians will trace the real beginning of the Battle of Britain back to those days when the Royal Air Force first gained local air superiority over the German Air Force at Dunkirk. On June 1, 1940, the British shot down or crippled seventy-five

German planes and lost only sixteen of their own. On that day the British realized the first fruits of their feverish preparation for air warfare. They had been unable to stop the swarms of the Luftwaffe during the Battle of Flanders, but they filled the air over Dunkirk with every plane they could muster. On that day the British first felt that the Royal Air Force might turn the tide of the whole conflict.

At Dunkirk the British had saved an army, but they had lost all of its heavy equipment. Though much of that equipment was rendered useless to the Germans, and though American supplies were just beginning to reach England, Dunkirk was a disaster with respect to material. The British were compelled to face a crisis without adequate equipment for their forces.

The home defenses of Britain also were weak. An American observer was later to report that during June of 1940 there was probably not more than one machine gun for every fifteen hundred yards of coastline along the angle of southeast England which would have to bear the brunt of any Nazi attack. Her munitions industries were working at top speed, but they had the double task of refitting the army and outfitting the home defenses for one of the grimmest fights in history. In the air the British lacked both combat planes and combat pilots.

A lesser people would probably have given up the struggle. In some six weeks the British had seen the collapse of all their plans and strategy as well as a tactical defeat of their army. France's Maginot Line was to have held out until 1943, by which time Britain expected to have brought her air program to its full effectiveness. But the Maginot Line had fallen, and the entire European coastline which faces the British Isles on the east and south was in German hands. From bases in the Low Countries, in France, and in Norway submarines could make direct attacks on British shipping. The acquisition of bases on the Atlantic coasts of France and Norway enabled German submarines to range the full sweep of the Atlantic, from Iceland to the River Plate. Germany thus prepared to lay siege to the island fortress of England by cutting the lines which carried supplies to her factories and to her armies.

No less important was the German acquisition of coastal bases for her air force. From fields in the Low Countries and in France the planes of the Luftwaffe were able not only to attack England directly but to attack all British shipping in coastal waters. On July 14, a flight of twenty-five German dive bombers, Junkers 87's in mass formation, attacked ten British merchant ships proceeding in broad daylight through the somewhat narrow Straits of Dover. Systematically they hurled their bombs at the relatively slow-moving targets. Whether because of canny defense maneuvering and accurate antiaircraft fire, or because of poor bombing, no ship was damaged. The fight was ended when Spitfires of the R.A.F. Coastal Command drove the Junkers back to their continental bases (*see* Note 4, p. 255).

That attack showed Germany's intent to use air and submarine power to the fullest extent in blockading the British Isles. Hitler had boasted before the war that navies were "the obsolete toys of plutocratic nations." Now he jubilantly believed that he had sufficient air and submarine power to make good that boast, to neutralize the British Navy, to strangle the British Isles, and then to occupy them and end the war. Propaganda Minister

Goebbels promised the elated German soldiers, "You have just one more battle to win; then the bells of peace will ring."

In the early summer of 1940 that promise seemed all too reasonable. On July 1, the Allies were composed of Great Britain, France, Poland, Norway, Holland, and Belgium. But five of these nations were captives of Germany, and their only contribution to the war effort could be a few men without equipment. The United States had begun to send supplies to Britain, but the amount was still small. In effect, Britain was alone in her fight against the Nazi machine.

But there was no diminishing of her will to fight. In spite of the odds the British people determined to fight on. Churchill had spoken with the voice of the nation when he announced that Great Britain and the Empire would fight "if necessary, for years; if necessary, alone."

Hitler's plan for the invasion of the British Isles involved three steps. First, the German Luftwaffe was to establish supremacy in the air by overwhelming the flying formations of the R.A.F. and by bombing its fields and bases out of existence. Once air supremacy was established, the Luftwaffe was to carry on with a systematic and progressive destruction of all communications, rail and road, power and telephone lines, and broadcasting facilities. The first step of the invasion plan was designed to isolate and immobilize the British defense units and to shatter the national morale under incessant bombing and machine-gun fire from the sky.

The second step was to begin the actual invasion. After thorough preparation by dive-bomber attacks at selected points along Britain's coastline, boatloads of

German shock troops were to land and break through the coastal defense lines. These troops were to carry the beaches, to push the defenders back as far as possible, and then to dig in to hold the beach heads thus established. Throughout this and the next step, the Luftwaffe was to furnish a roof over the invasion forces and to beat off naval defense. Meanwhile, parachute troops were to land at certain airfields to repair them for use by German planes and to prepare the way for air-borne troops who would attack the rear areas of the defense.

The final step called for the use of mechanized units. Tanks and other motorized equipment were to cross the water in self-propelled barges whose prows were fitted with hinged ramps. At sea this ramp was to be laid back in the barge as a protection and shield for the men and equipment beneath. Once the barge reached the German-held beach, the ramp was to be let down and the motor vehicles were to roar down the incline onto dry land. From then on it was to be the technique already familiar in Poland, Norway, and France.

The plan for the invasion was obvious, and the British made preparations to meet it. The whole population was mobilized to repel the invader. The already efficient Air Raid Precautions organization expanded and intensified its activity. Rudimentary training in resistance to parachute attack was given to civilians. Every place name was obliterated from the landscape in order that the invader, if he ever landed, would have little to guide him.

But the most important instrument in the defense of Britain, the one grossly underestimated by the German high command, was the Royal Air Force. Numerically inferior to the Luftwaffe, it had the advantage of operating close to its own bases and over familiar terrain. Under these circumstances it developed a striking power and lethal effectiveness that surprised Germany and inspired the rest of the world.

The opening date of the Battle of Britain cannot be determined with any accuracy. Dunkirk might have been the beginning. The July 14 attack on the convoy at Dover was certainly part of it. The whole month of July was one of intensive reconnaissance with German planes almost daily over England and Scotland, but out of reach and refusing to give battle.

The first stage of the battle proper began on August 8 when Hitler launched the Luftwaffe on its first great task. They were to start the preparation for invasion by the destruction of the R.A.F. and the blasting of all naval concentrations and facilities. Massed flights of German planes filled the British sky. The naval dockyards and the airfields were bombed repeatedly. Channel shipping could proceed only by night. The Channel coast was blasted over and over again. Dover deservedly got the name "Hell's Corner." The Luftwaffe made an all-out effort to get and maintain supremacy over the British skies.

But the Luftwaffe failed. The German high command had pinned its faith to the same massed formation system of daylight bombing by which all land resistance in the occupied areas of Europe had been overcome. These tactics failed over England for three specific reasons. Most important was the fact that the R.A.F. refused to be beaten. The speed and maneuverability of the British Hurricanes and Spitfires and the dash and daring of their pilots could not be overcome by mass attacks. The second reason was the efficiency of the antiaircraft batteries and the systems of balloon barrages around the cities. These forced German bombers to operate at such altitudes that accurate bombardment of military objectives proved most difficult. The British Air Ministry reported that the enemy bombers flew at 11,000 to 15,000 feet and dropped to 7,000 and 8,000 feet only to release their bombs. The third reason for the failure of the Luftwaffe in this phase was the highly effective British system of co-ordinated observation posts, listening stations, and air force dispatching operations. With this system every British plane was used with maximum effect and minimum risk.

The Germans continued these mass daylight attacks, at times using as many as one thousand planes in a single operation, until August 19. Their losses were terrific. Their heavy bombers had to be protected by fighters, and the R.A.F. could throw more fighters into the defense than the Luftwaffe could throw into the attack. In the week ending August 17, the R.A.F. and antiaircraft accounted for 492 German planes with a loss of 115 of their own. In one day, August 15, the Luftwaffe lost 180 planes as against 34 planes for the R.A.F. By August 19 it was clear to the German high command that mass daylight raids could not destroy Britain's air and sea power at the same time.

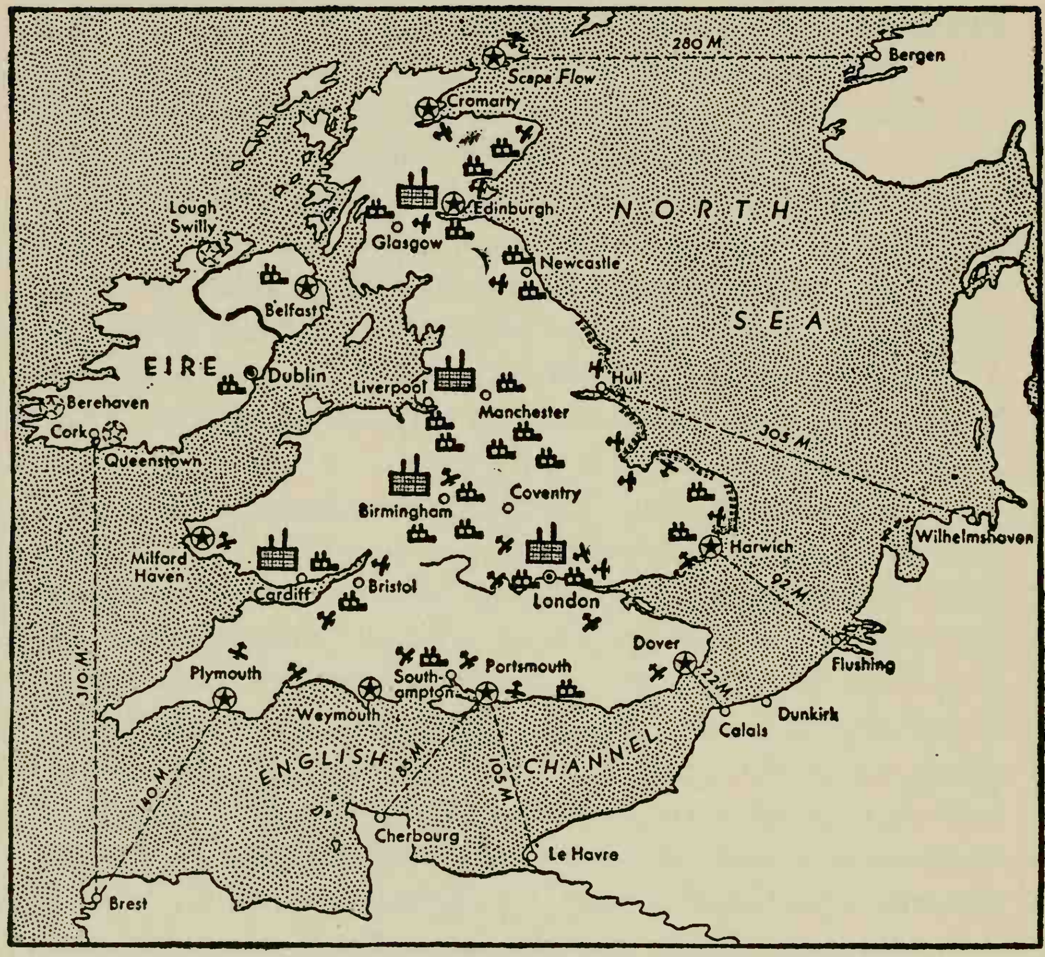
The general tactics of the Luftwaffe in the stage of mass attacks were to make a feint against one point and then, twenty to forty minutes later, to deliver a mass attack against the real target. To counter these tactics, the R.A.F. met the feinting attack with only sufficient numbers of fighters to hold the enemy off. When the main attack came, every available fighter went into the air to meet it. In actual combat with each wave of the

Luftwaffe, about half of the British fighters attacked the German fighters while the other half went directly after the bombers. With their screen of fighters gone, the bombers were relatively open to attack. Most of these dogfights took place in the skies above the South Coast.

The second stage of the Battle of Britain began on August 19. Finding that the mass attacks on both naval and air facilities were not progressing according to plan, the German high command changed its tactics to concentrate on British air power and industrial facilities. Apparently in the hope of repeating the ruthless successes of Poland and France, the German flyers attempted to blast the inland airfields and to destroy the planes of the R.A.F. on the ground.

At the same time, attention was turned to the factories of the Midlands (*see* Map 17, p. 86). In the long run the lathe is as deadly a weapon as the rifle, for defeat inevitably follows suspension of the manufacture of munitions and equipment. In the total war of our day, sustained and even accelerated production is the prime essential of survival. The stubborn defense of Britain was directly supported by her industries. The crippling of those industries would cripple the defense and leave the way open for its complete obliteration.

The raids of the second stage of the Battle of Britain were made by fewer bombers than had participated in the earlier mass attacks. Usually not more than fifty or sixty bombers, protected by large groups of fighters, came over at one time. Most of the combats were fought at altitudes out of sight of the ground. German casualties in this stage were even heavier than in the previous stage, with a ratio of seven German planes to one British plane knocked down. Most of those winged in the fight-


280 M.
Bergen
Scapa Flow
Cromarty
Edinburgh
NORTH
SEA
Lough Swilly
Glasgow
Newcastle
Belfast
EIRE
Dublin
Liverpool
Manchester
Hull
Berehaven
Cork
Queenstown
305 M.
Coventry
Birmingham
Wilhelmshaven
Harwich
Milford Haven
Cardiff
Bristol
London
92 M.
Dover
Flushing
Plymouth
South-ampton
Portsmouth
310 M.
Weymouth
22 M.
Calais
Dunkirk
ENGLISH CHANNEL
85 M.
105 M.
140 M.
Cherbourg
Le Havre
Brest

17. TARGETS FOR BOMBERS

ing fell on British soil; this was another advantage to the defenders, for the British pilots could fly again, while the Germans went to prison camps.

In this second stage of the Battle of Britain the R.A.F. began to take the offensive. Although Air Marshal Goering had boasted that the defenses of Berlin were impregnable, British bombers dropped their loads on military targets in the Berlin area. They also harassed the industrial areas of Germany and the so-called invasion ports along the coast of France and the Low Countries.

By the time that the second stage of the battle was under way, it was evident that credit for delaying, even for halting the invasion belonged to the R.A.F. On August 20, Churchill paid tribute to the flyers of the Empire in the House of Commons. "The gratitude of every home in our island, in our Empire, and indeed throughout the world—except in the abodes of the guilty—goes to the British airmen who, undaunted by odds, unwearied in their constant challenge and mortal danger, are turning the tide of world war by their prowess and devotion. . . . Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few."

This stage of the German attack proved as ineffective as that before. The attacks on the military and industrial objectives had failed to break the resistance of the British. The Luftwaffe again switched objectives and entered on a deliberate war of attrition. The third stage of the Battle of Britain was directed entirely at the city of London in an attempt to raze the capital of the Empire and to shatter the morale of its people. On September 7 two waves of German planes, three hundred and fifty of them altogether, dumped tons of bombs on the London area. In spite of determined resistance by British Hurricanes and Spitfires, parts of London were set in flames.

The German high command had great hopes for success in the Battle of London. From their new fields in France and the Low Countries the bombers could operate without the weight of heavy fuel loads. The escorting fighter planes could operate more efficiently on the abbreviated range. The altitude compelled by antiaircraft and balloon barrages was no longer a handicap, for altitude is no deterrent to indiscriminate bombing. The raids went on day and night, and at night the bombers did not need fighter protection.

But the Battle of London went also to the British. London's entire population rallied to her defense. The professional and volunteer fire fighters were somehow able to keep the countless fires in check. The property damage was enormous, from Buckingham Palace to the slums of Limehouse. Some fourteen thousand civilians were killed and twenty-one thousand more were injured in the city alone. Where the German high command had expected to destroy British morale, they had only strengthened it. "London can take it."

The climax of the raids on London and of the entire Battle of Britain came on September 15. At noon a large flight of German Dorniers, escorted by Messerschmitt fighters, broke through to the center of the city. In the first half hour of the raid there were almost two hundred individual combats being waged in London's sky. Of the mass of attacking planes, 185 were shot down; like all the others, the raid failed of its objective.

Four plans of air attack on the British Isles had failed. The Germans had proved incapable of destroying military and naval installations. They had failed to interrupt industrial production. They had failed to conquer the R.A.F. in plane-to-plane combat. And they had failed to destroy the morale of the civilian population. On October 6 they began another plan of attack. Since formation bombing had failed, they outfitted single fighters with bombs for high altitude attacks. But these raids had only nuisance value and were given up by the first of November. The Battle of Britain was over.

All four stages of the Battle of Britain had been German defeats. From August 8 until August 18 the Luftwaffe had blasted at the installations of the Navy and the R.A.F. without seriously impairing their efficiency. From August 19 until September 5 it had blasted at the industrial centers of Britain, as well as at the R.A.F.; but still the defense did not slacken. From September 5 until October 6 the Luftwaffe pounded London with the most merciless attacks of history; London took it undaunted. From October 6 until October 31 the Luftwaffe tried spot attacks on key points, but without any considerable damage. The Battle of Britain was fought and won in the air. The Royal Air Force had beaten off the highly touted Luftwaffe. The seemingly invincible German war machine for the first time had been stopped at the first point where it met equal training and equipment.

It has often been asked why Hitler delayed the first step of his projected invasion of England until August 8. Probably the answer lies in the characteristic thoroughness of the German high command. During the month of July the Germans began to concentrate barges and other shipping along the so-called invasion coast of Europe. At one time, more than three thousand barges were reported ready for the attempt. They were also developing along the coast more bases which could be used for launching the attack. Throughout the summer and fall of 1940, and ever since then, the Bomber Command of the R.A.F. made repeated raids on ship concentrations and supply lines to the coast. By August, Hitler probably had some adequate bases and sufficient concentrations of shipping, troops, and equipment to start the attempt at invasion; and so he launched the Luftwaffe to clear the way. But the vaunted German Air Force was never able to deal the death blow to the R.A.F. The invasion troops waited across the water while the summer drew to a close. The gale which swept the English Channel on September 16-19 scattered much of the shipping, and the immediate danger of invasion was averted by the onset of bad weather.

While the Battle of Britain was raging, other events were happening over the rest of the world. In the United States the Congress gave approval to the Selective Service Act on August 28. On September 3 President Roosevelt made the dramatic announcement of the transfer of fifty overage American destroyers to Britain in return for the lease of bases in the British possessions in the Western Hemisphere. By the exchange America gained a screen against just such an attack as was raging against Great Britain, while Britain gained the means of keeping open her supply lines to withstand the attack (*see* Map 18, p. 96, and Note 5, p. 256). On September 6, Congress completed its action on the Total Defense Bill, carrying appropriations of more than five billion dollars.

Japan's principal commitments to the Axis appear to have synchronized with military setbacks suffered by Germany. It was on September 27, 1940, when the Battle of Britain was drawing to an inauspicious close for the Nazis, that Japan joined in a tripartite pact with Germany and Italy. And on December 7, 1941, the date of Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor, Hitler's theretofore victorious forces in front of Moscow had begun to reel before Russian counterattacks. It may be noteworthy that, so far as Japan was concerned, all of the preliminaries essential to Japanese involvement in each instance had been completed while the German onslaught seemed to be meeting with a huge measure of success. It is a matter for conjecture, therefore, whether Japan intended to weight the Axis effort, or to emulate Italy's 1940 example for acquisition of an easy bargain in war spoils.

On November 5, 1940, Churchill declared that German submarine raids constituted a greater menace to Great Britain than did German air raids. Like Napoleon before him, Hitler had laid aside plans for an invasion of the British Isles in favor of the slower strategy of counterblockade. But the first Battle of Britain may not be the last. As there was a second Battle of the Marne in 1918, so there may be a second Battle of Britain in the next year. Churchill has warned that the danger of German invasion will never be past until Hitler has been beaten on every front. The major foci of the war have shifted to other areas. The Battle of Britain was the one great victory of the Allies up to Russia in 1941. The victory of the British flyers—the so few who did so much for so many—changed the German war plan of 1940.

CHAPTER VI

THE BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC

September, 1939—

> No power and no support coming from any part of the world can change the outcome of this battle in any respect. England will fall.
>
> ADOLF HITLER
> *Commemoration of War Dead,* March 16, 1941

AS EARLY AS 1939, a large section of the American public recognized the fact that the survival of Great Britain was a matter of desperate importance to us, that "Aid to Britain" was a highly important form of our national self-defense. Not only are British materiel and man power invaluable to us now, but the British Isles themselves constitute an indispensable military position from which the United Nations can launch attacks against the common enemy.

The real importance of the Battle of the Atlantic lies in the fact that this is a war of production, a war of supply. However brave or well trained, the fighting man of today, in order to have an even chance of victory, must have fighting tools—planes, tanks, guns—as good and as numerous as those of his enemy. He must be well fed and well clothed. He must have ammunition for his weapons. Today, it takes the work of perhaps a score of men, working full time, to supply the needs of one soldier at the front. That ratio, moreover, mounts steadily as we develop more and yet more fighting machines.

In peacetime, Britain produces something less than half of the food consumed by the forty-six million people living in the British Isles. For the rest she normally depends on imports from Scandinavia, the Continent, her Dominions, and the Americas. Cotton, wool, petroleum, metals, and similar items bulk even larger than food in the total of goods annually imported to sustain British life and industry. Britain is a great factory and a great department store combined; from the world she takes raw materials which she turns into finished goods for sale in the world market. Cut off from her sources of supply she could be starved into surrender within a few months, even weeks.

The normal peacetime problems of supplying Britain's needs were greatly increased by war. To survive, Britain had to build a war machine, starting from almost nothing. Practically all of the army's modern equipment had been left on the beach at Dunkirk. Except for her navy and the relatively small but effective R.A.F., Britain had little but her bare hands and her courage with which to face any German force which might be landed in the British Isles. Germany had gained a six years' start on her opponent, with her "guns before butter" program. She had, in fact, the most powerful war machine of all time. If it was to be stopped, Britain must secure not only the goods needed for everyday existence, but also steel, copper, petroleum, all the materials from which a modern war machine is built. She must have them, moreover, in time and in the right place.

Germany knew Britain's plight, down to the last detail, just as she had known it in 1914 when she planned her first submarine blockade. In 1917 she all but succeeded. In those dark days the American Navy played its part in laying the mine fields and submarine nets which finally made it almost impossible for a U-boat to get out of a German harbor. Until that job was finished it was touch-and-go as to whether Britain would survive or starve.

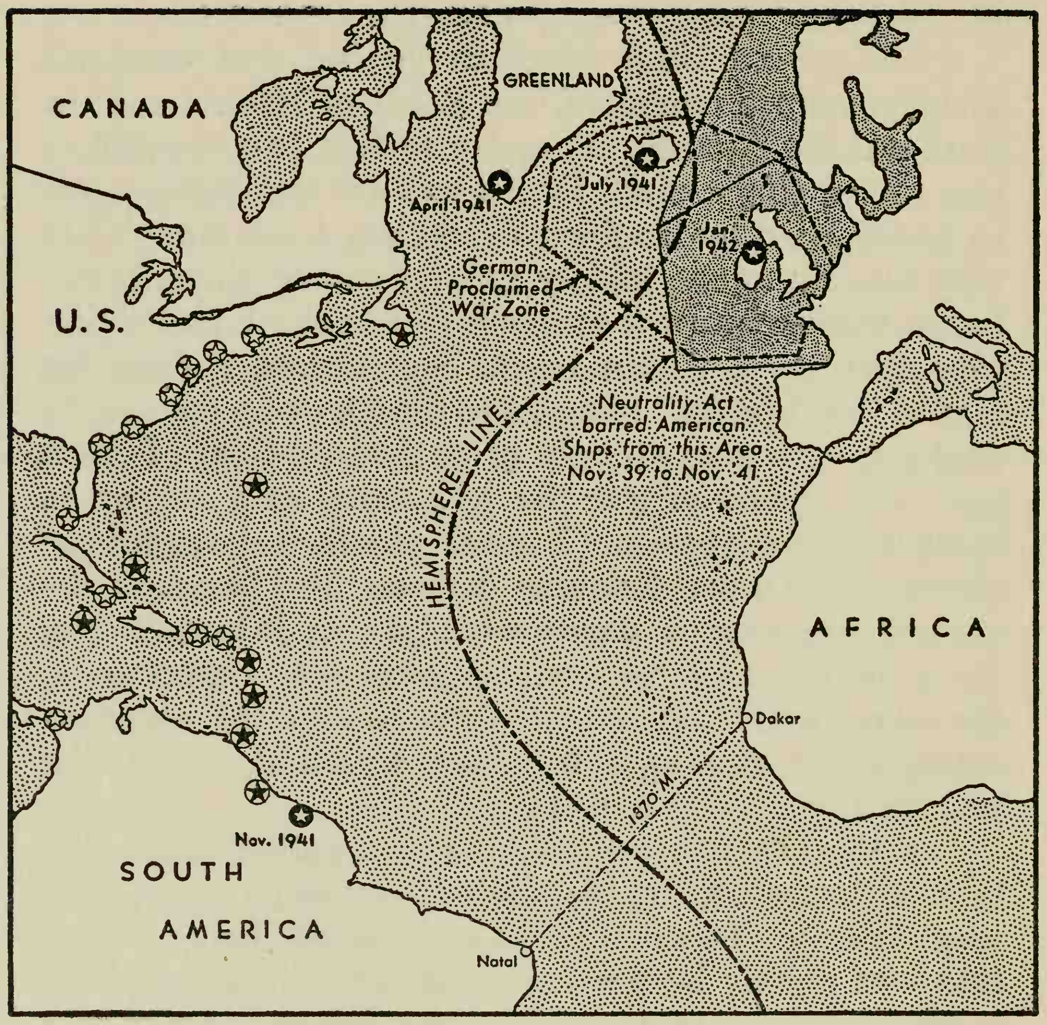
And now we are back to the same problem, this time an even tougher problem than in the last war. This time a mine barrage to close the German harbors is not enough. Every port and inlet from the northern end of Norway to the coast of Spain can be used as a German submarine base. The entire north shore of the Mediterranean between Turkey and Spain is Axis-controlled. This time Hitler has long-range patrol planes and bombers, spotting the convoys for the submarines and bombing them far out at sea. Those submarines are larger and more effective than the U-boats of the earlier day. Britain, moreover, cannot count this time on the help of the French and Italian navies; one is a neutral, the other an enemy. Finally, the harbors of the Irish Free State, still hugging its neutrality in a war-torn world, are closed to American and British shipping and naval units. The extremely suitable Irish meadows are not available for air bases from which planes can hunt the U-boats and guard the sea lanes. That last fact alone handicaps tremendously the safeguarding of the sea lanes west of the British Isles.

Yet Britain has managed to survive, even with the odds so heavily against her. At the same time she has managed to keep her troops and supplies moving to fronts all over the world. Every German leader anticipated her collapse in 1940 after the Nazi armies had swept over western Europe. In December, 1941, Winston Churchill told the Canadian Parliament that in June, 1940, the French generals had informed their Prime Minister and his cabinet, "In three weeks England will have her neck wrung like a chicken." And he voiced the British spirit with, "Some chicken! Some neck!"

The all-out Nazi effort to "wring that chicken's neck" combined two plans, the Battle of Britain and the Battle of the Atlantic. They are in fact two interlinked parts of a single plan. Docks and port facilities were to be smashed by bombing raids. Sea lanes were filled with floating mines, laid by submarine and plane. Long-range bombers struck at convoys whenever and wherever they came within reach. Submarines ranged the seas in "wolf packs," hanging to the edge of a convoy, by daylight, emerging at night or in the half-light of dawn and dusk, often rising in the very center of a convoy, to bring swift destruction. Cargo ships which straggled out of formation were definitely doomed. The Germans developed a supersonic device which makes it unnecessary for a U-boat to show even its periscope. Determining the range and direction of its victim by the sound of propellers, it releases its torpedoes with a high degree of accuracy (*see* Note 6, p. 256).

When the war began, American policy was bound by the Neutrality Act, passed on August 31, 1935, at a time when we hoped that we could avoid being drawn into war merely by passing legislation. This Act made it illegal for American vessels to carry goods in a war zone. In accordance with this Act, the President at once outlined the zones which could not be entered by American ships (*see* Map 18, p. 96). The Act also provided that America would not sell arms to belligerents.

Shortly after the outbreak of war in 1939, the countries of Latin America and the United States established


CANADA
GREENLAND
April 1941
July 1941
Jan. 1942
German Proclaimed War Zone
U. S.
Neutrality Act barred American Ships from this Area Nov. '39 to Nov. '41
HEMISPHERE LINE
AFRICA
Dakar
1870 M.
Nov. 1941
SOUTH AMERICA
Natal

18. THE ATLANTIC OCEAN, 1939–1942

the so-called "safety zone" which provided that there should be no hostilities within approximately three hundred miles of the Americas. It was hoped that British warships and German submarines would thus be kept away from our shores. But in October, 1939, the German raider *Deutschland* seized the American freighter *City of Flint* on the high seas. The incident of the *Graf von Spee* off Montevideo, Uruguay, in December, 1939, proved that war could not be kept from the peaceful Americas by passing resolutions (*see* Note 7, p. 257). Public opinion in the United States began to be aroused.

The German conquest of western Europe awakened the American people to the fact that American outposts off the Atlantic coast were inadequate to defense. The increased efficiency of bombing planes and submarines materially narrowed the bounds of the Atlantic. The powers of aggression were firmly entrenched on the opposite shore. The British Navy, long our bulwark on the seven seas, was threatened. The exchange of naval bases for destroyers in September, 1940, was our first step toward defense against a specific threat.

Early in November the Neutrality Act was amended to provide for the selling of arms to any nation, provided the buyer put the cash on the "barrelhead" before the arms were taken from American shores. This helped only Britain and her allies; Germany had no cash and Britain controlled the sea lanes. A trickle of American munitions began to move across the Atlantic, but only a trickle.

By December, 1940, the opinion of the American people was beginning to crystallize. Popular polls indicated that we believed war with Germany and Italy to be certain, if they won their fight against Britain. Consistent with this belief there arose the desire to give increased aid to Britain in order that the Atlantic might still be guarded by the British Navy. By March, 1941, this feeling had crystallized into the so-called Lend-Lease Bill. By its provisions Great Britain, and her allies, might obtain American supplies, might even have her ships repaired in American shipyards, on the basis of a loan or lease to be repaid after the conclusion of the war. Passage of the bill guaranteed the industrial capacity of America to the cause of democracy.

The history of the German effort to block the sea lanes is a story of continually increasing pressure and redoubled measures to sink the ship tonnage which links the supply bases of democracy in the Americas to the fighting fronts. Cargo ships laden with precious supplies were being sunk at a rate far greater than they could be replaced by the normal combined output of the British, Dominion, and American shipyards. Throughout the fall of 1940 and the winter and spring of 1941, ship sinkings averaged four hundred thousand tons per month, rising at the end of that period to a half million tons monthly. Even with the additions to the British merchant marine from captured Axis tonnage and the Scandinavian, Dutch, Belgian, and French merchantmen which had been left in British hands by the fortunes of war, Britain was fighting a losing battle. The gravity of her situation was evident from the fact that in the late spring she abandoned the practice of issuing reports of ship losses.

Four major weapons were employed in the Axis blockade, the surface raider, the mine, the long-range bomber, and the submarine. The surface raiders—naval vessels and reconditioned merchantmen—have played a relatively smaller part in the blockade than in the last war. The *Graf von Spee* was scuttled at Montevideo after sinking nine British cargo vessels. The *Bismarck,* the most powerful unit of German's new navy, was destroyed on her first voyage; but she first accounted for the British battle cruiser *Hood,* with a single well-placed shell. Two once-powerful German ships, the *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau,* which sought safety in the French harbor of Brest, were regularly and methodically bombed by the R.A.F. These, however, were able to reach German ports in the Bight of Helgoland, after a running Channel fight in February, 1942.

The mine, laid by submarine or plane, at one stage was accounting for a large part of Britain's losses; but it is today relatively less important. The hundreds of British mine sweepers must be given credit for the improved situation. Their task was complicated by the high effectiveness of the modern magnetic mine (*see* Note 8, p. 258) and more recently, the acoustic mine, as compared with the contact mine of 1939. Both of these types have to be laid in water that is neither too deep nor too shallow; but the Germans now have airplanes available as mine layers to reach areas which are not accessible to submarines. They have even dropped acoustic mines in the Suez Canal from aircraft based on Crete. Even when the mine menace is successfully circumvented, it has a large nuisance value. During the later stages of the first World War the British had to keep about six hundred small craft constantly engaged in mine sweeping.

The long-range Focke-Wulf Kondor bomber has accounted for its share of shipping. Operating far from all bases, thus making it impossible for British land-based fighter planes to intercept them, they were until recently immune to every form of British defense except the convoy's antiaircraft fire. Now the planes of the British Coastal Command and ship-based warplanes are combating these German planes effectively.

None of these three weapons had approached the effectiveness of the submarine, particularly since Germany adopted the tactics of the "wolf pack," supplemented by aerial observation. In clear weather it is today impossible for a convoy to avoid detection. Once discovered, losses thereafter depend on the relative strength of attack and defense. For the merchant ship which straggles out of line or gets lost from the convoy in the darkness or fog, it is usually a question of hours until a torpedo sends her to the bottom. Even when no actual losses are being incurred Britain is taking a constant loss in shipping effectiveness, estimated at 25 per cent, since a convoy can move no faster than the speed of its slowest ship, in instances only five to six knots. There is a further time loss in assembling the convoy, amounting to several days for the ships first loaded.

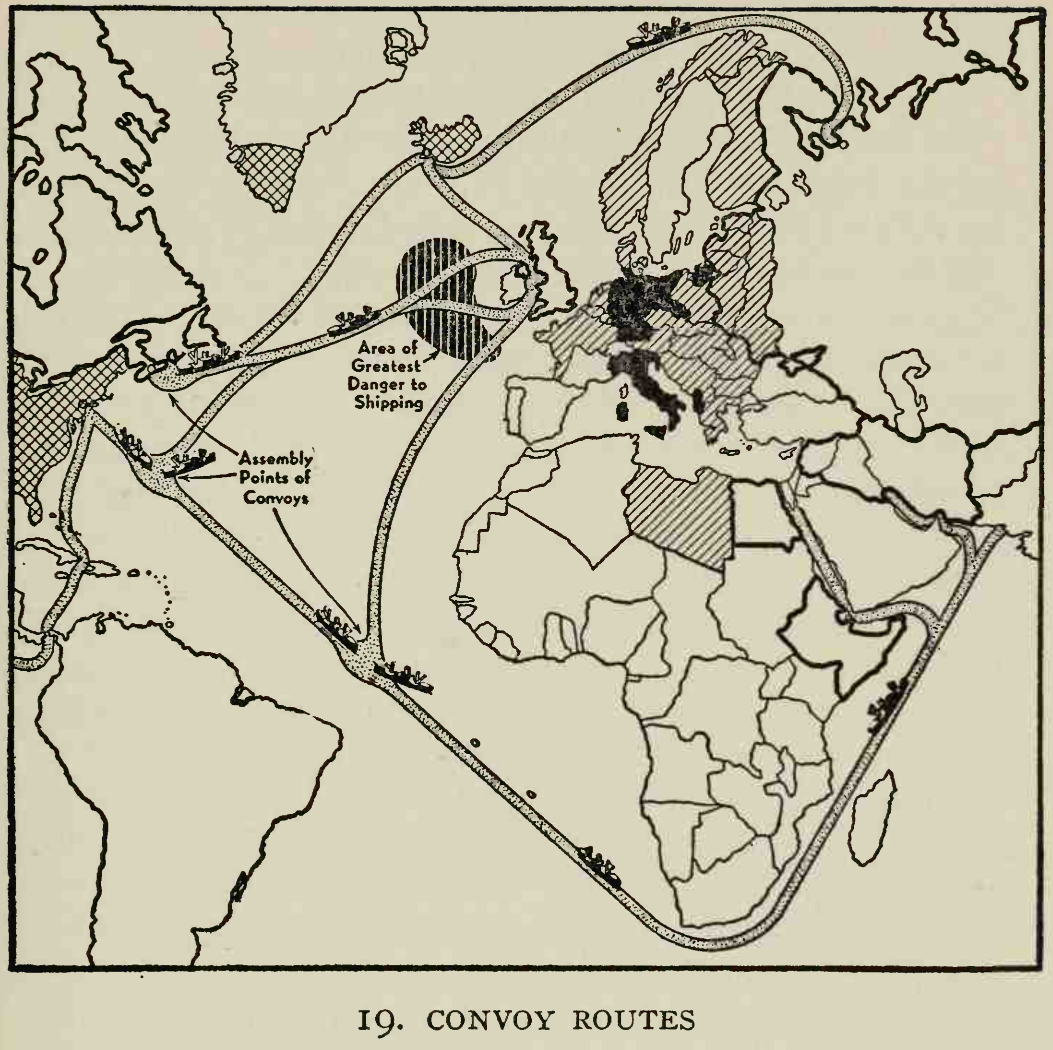
Realizing the power of Germany's attack, it is almost incredible that Britain has made such positive headway toward the winning of the Battle of the Atlantic. Whatever credit may be due the various forms of aid furnished by the United States (and it has been substantial), we must admit gladly that the skill, courage, and iron will behind Britain's relentless war against the raiders is primarily responsible for the sharp decline in sinkings. Prime Minister Churchill has repeatedly declared that the effectiveness of Britain's defense measures depended at all times on having enough ships for escort duty and mine sweeping. The immediate and tremendous increase in ship losses after Dunkirk illustrates the point. So many of Britain's small vessels—destroyers, sloops, and trawlers—were damaged or sunk in the evacuation of the B.E.F., that for months it was impossible to give proper protection to the convoys.

The precise details of British naval strategy and tactics are a military secret, something which the Germans are only too anxious to learn. We do know that convoys move through dangerous waters protected by as strong a naval escort as may be available. Often no more than two of three escort ships can be provided for a convoy numbering thirty vessels or more. With radios silenced, and blacked out after dark, they are herded and guarded like sheep. Air attack brings the escorts in close to their charges, ensuring more effective protection. Contact with a submarine results in a swift dash to the area of its location and the prompt firing of a "pattern" of depth bombs, sometimes numbering ten bombs to cover the area. Detection and accurate location of the U-boats has been greatly advanced by the employment of "asdic," an electrical underwater spotting device. Occasionally a damaged submarine will surface to surrender or to make its final plunge to the bottom. Often bubbles and oil on the surface indicate a probable sinking. However, a kill is reported only when definitely confirmed by positive evidence, usually the taking of prisoners or finding of bodies. Germany's actual loss of submarines is of course unknown. In all probability it will always remain a secret (*see* Note 9, p. 258).

German naval strategists apparently miscalculated the relative strengths of the Nazi offensive and the British defense in the Battle of the Atlantic. They also erred in predicting the actions of the United States. There was genuine surprise in Germany when the United States took over the protection of Greenland in April, 1941, and three months later landed a strong force in Iceland to establish joint Anglo-American occupation. The control over the northern sea routes to Britain which is possible from these bases (*see* Map 19, p. 103) effected the final interlocking of American defense with aid to Britain. In his announcement of the occupation of Iceland, President Roosevelt declared that the Navy would take "all necessary measures" to ensure the safety of American ships to Iceland and "to all other strategic points in the Atlantic." Finally, the creation of the North Atlantic patrol greatly reduced Britain's patrol area.

However, more remained to be done. In particular Britain had to get more merchant tonnage to replace her losses. Four positive measures directly and indirectly combined to accomplish that end. British sea routes in the Western Hemisphere were taken over by our merchant marine, putting an end to duplication of effort. In April, 1941, the United States government seized sixty-five foreign vessels in American ports (two German, twenty-eight Italian, thirty-five Danish) after it was discovered that the German and Italian crews were destroying the ships' machinery. (In December, France's 83,000 ton liner *Normandie* and some smaller French vessels, the Swedish liner *Kungsholm* and a number of Finnish ships were also taken over.) The United States Maritime Commission launched a shipbuilding program scheduled to produce some fourteen hundred cargo vessels, between July 1, 1941, and December 31, 1943, the greatest shipbuilding effort in history. Under the Lend-Lease Act considerable tonnage, particularly in tankers, was turned over to Britain.

Taken together, those steps went far to assure provision of all the shipping needed for the war, provided


Area of Greatest Danger to Shipping
Assembly Points of Convoys

19. CONVOY ROUTES

always that sinkings could be held to a reasonable figure. Still, each month saw the U-boats operating farther from their bases, hoping always to find the convoys unescorted. In May, 1941, one of those long-range submarines sank the American freighter *Robin Moor* in the South Atlantic. President Roosevelt met that act of piracy by declaring an unlimited national emergency. The activity and range of our naval and air patrols were again stepped up. The toll of ship losses began to decline.

In part the improvement was the result of the fact that Germany, after June, was concentrating every effort on knocking out Russia. Hitler told the German people that once Russia was out of the way, a matter of a few months at most, Britain could be disposed of at Germany's leisure. Once again Nazi strategy was based on a false estimate, for Russia held up. In desperation the submarine wolf packs were sent out, beginning in early September, to strike at American merchant ships and naval vessels in the North Atlantic lanes. The merchantmen, *Steel Seafarer, Sessa,* and *Montana,* the destroyers *Greer, Reuben James,* and *Kearny,* and the naval tanker *Salinas* were all attacked. Only the *Greer* escaped all damage. The *Kearny* made port after losing ten men. The rest were sunk, the *Reuben James* losing a hundred men.

Except for the technicality of a formal declaration, the United States was now at war, forced into the situation by Germany's determination to blast our shipping out of the Atlantic sea lanes. The president, exercising his constitutional powers as Commander in Chief of the armed forces, and his sworn obligation to defend American lives, American rights, and American property, met the Nazi challenge with his order to the Navy when Iceland was occupied. International lawyers might still quibble about the exact status of our foreign policy; but for the U-boat commander with his eye glued to the periscope and for the American destroyer crew standing at battle stations, the technicalities were of no importance. They were concerned only with the job of striking before they were destroyed. And that is war.

In part the German attacks on our naval and merchant ships may be taken as the Nazi answer to the "Atlantic Charter," the joint declaration issued on August 14, 1941, by President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill after their historic conference at sea. One of its eight articles, the determination to re-establish the freedom of the seas, leaves no room for the naval doctrine first proclaimed by Germany in the first World War, the sinking of merchantmen without challenge and without regard to the loss of life among passengers. Under Nazi leadership that rule of naval warfare is today practiced by all the Axis powers.

Step by step the will of the American people had resulted in successive changes in the Neutrality Act that had been passed in 1935. It was becoming apparent to everyone that, in order to guarantee British victory in the Battle of the Atlantic, even more must be done to increase and safeguard delivery of supplies to Britain. The sinking of American ships indicated clearly the need for guns on these ships to protect them. The clear intent of Nazi Germany to stop at nothing in her efforts to block the supply routes was shown to the American people when our Navy caught a German raider sailing under the American flag in the South Atlantic. Our nation rapidly made up its mind. On November 17, 1941, the last clauses of the Neutrality Act were repealed.

American merchant ships could now carry guns for their own protection and, theoretically, they could proceed to any port in the world. Ships under the American flag now sailed under the old principle of "freedom of the seas" for which we fought the Barbary Pirates in 1801 and the British in 1812 (*see* Note 10, p. 259).

On December 7, 1941, war came to the United States from the Far East. Our difficulties with Japan had appeared minor compared to the Battle of the Atlantic. Japan chose to attempt to gain her ends by a sudden attack. The result was also war in the Atlantic. For Japan, Germany, and Italy had been bound by a published agreement which said in effect that if one were attacked by another power, the others would join. From Axis reasoning it would appear that the United States attacked Japan at Pearl Harbor.

Actual war, all-out war, has intensified the character of one of the great battles of all history, the Battle of the Atlantic. At the same time another element has suddenly become all-important, the distribution of American and British sea power between the Pacific and the Atlantic. To meet the threat in both oceans, we discover that our original production plans must go into the discard. President Roosevelt has called on our shipyards to turn out eight million tons of cargo tonnage in 1942, and ten million tons in 1943. (In 1941 we barely reached a total of one million tons.) If the project appears fantastic, we have only to realize that by June 1, 1942, twelve cargo ships per week will be coming from our shipyards. In December, 1941, the total was three ships a week. New naval vessels, more difficult to build, are nevertheless being launched and commissioned at a rate far more rapid than first estimated. The same production gains are being made in the British and Dominion shipyards.

Winston Churchill made one of the most important announcements of the war in the closing days of 1941, but the significance of his words was overshadowed by the pressure of events elsewhere in the world. He announced that the sinkings of merchant tonnage by Axis submarines, surface raiders, and planes had been reduced to one eighth of the monthly totals at the opening of the year. Part of the credit for that reduction must go to the American Navy which, according to a statement without specific figures by Secretary Knox, is doing a magnificent job in destroying Axis submarines in the Atlantic.

The Battle of the Atlantic is not yet decided, perhaps will not be decided until the end of the struggle between the Axis and the United Nations. But the present indications are that the Atlantic will remain open to the ships, the troops, and the supplies of the democracies.

CHAPTER VII

THE MEDITERRANEAN THEATER OF WAR

June 10, 1940—

> If there is a true and fruitful peace, which must be accompanied by justice, we will adorn our rifles with the olive branch. But if this should not come to pass, take it for granted that we, tempered as we are by the Fascist climate, will adorn the points of our bayonets with the oak and laurel of victory!
>
> BENITO MUSSOLINI
> *To the workers of Milan,* October 6, 1934

MORE THAN TEN YEARS AGO the German military strategists evolved a plan which is fundamental to the Axis prosecution of this war. Germany was ready to build up the greatest land force the world had ever seen, but she had no hope of building naval power strong enough to cope with the largest navies in the world. The plan evolved settled the question of how to fight a navy without a navy.

The plan has come to be known as the "around the seas" technique. It is based on the very obvious fact that a fleet is of no value without bases from which to operate. It calls for the complete destruction of naval bases by land and air power, thus driving the enemy fleet out of the area and giving control of the sea into the hands of the land power.

Germany has followed this plan faithfully in trying to gain control of the Mediterranean. Her only hope of gaining such control is by the capture of Gibraltar, Malta, and the Suez Canal. To that end she has sought to send her armies around the coasts. The Balkan campaign of 1941 was directed to this end. The ill-fated drive into Russia had control of the Mediterranean as one of its underlying objectives. Eventually Germany must control Spain, French North Africa, Libya, the Near East, and Turkey if she is to take the Mediterranean away from the British Navy.

She wants the Mediterranean for two main reasons. She wants the economic riches of the countries which border on this great inland sea. And she also wants a safe sea highway over which she can carry home those riches. For example, it is not enough for Germany to conquer the rich oil fields of the Middle East; she must assure a safe means of getting the oil back to Germany or to other parts of her expanded empire.

From earliest recorded history, the Mediterranean and its shores have been the scene of many long and bitter wars as nations battled for its control. Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and Greece, original centers of Western civilization, all border upon this sea. The Romans called it *Mare Nostrum*, and despite all of Britain's evidence to the contrary, Mussolini has also adopted this possessive term; recently he has not been quite so insistent on the point.

An inland sea, the Mediterranean is 2,200 miles long from east to west, and about 1,200 miles wide at its broadest part, from the Italian Gulf of Genoa to the Gulf of Sidra just below Bengazi on the Libyan coast. The western entrance to the Mediterranean is between the British fortress of Gibraltar, at the southern end of the Spanish peninsula, and the northerly tip of Spanish

Morocco on the African continent, approximately fifteen miles away. The eastern entrance is even narrower; it is the 104-mile Suez Canal, by which the largest ocean-going ships can pass to and from the Orient by way of the Red Sea.

There is one more gateway from the Mediterranean, the narrow strait of the Turkish-controlled Dardanelles to the Black Sea, another inland body of water some six hundred miles long. This is the sea route to Russia and, by way of the Danube which empties into it, a waterway to central Europe as well. The terminals of caravan routes into central Asia are situated on the shores of the Black Sea, and control of that sea is the first step in the control of the rich oil field of the Caucasus.

The importance of the gateway to the Atlantic is obvious. The Suez Canal is Britain's gateway to India and the Far East. Contrary to general belief, it is not Britain's lifeline, for in normal times only about 11 per cent of her total imports are shipped through it. Of much greater value to Britain is its strategic use for the movement of the fleet between the West and the Far East.

On the other hand, the Suez Canal is vitally important for the Oriental commerce of those nations which border on the Black and Adriatic Seas, especially for Rumania, Bulgaria, Greece, Yugoslavia, and Italy. Unlike other Mediterranean nations farther west these countries cannot make use of the alternate route around the Cape of Good Hope, even in peacetime, except at greatly increased cost.

One additional British stronghold is the island of Malta, which is unique as the most-bombed target of the war. Situated as it is, midway between the Suez Canal and the Rock of Gibraltar, it is the keystone of the British position in the central Mediterranean. In British hands it offers a base for operations against Axis convoys operating between Africa and the Continent, and a stepping stone of considerable importance for any direct British attack on Italy. The Axis has attempted everything short of direct invasion to try to dislodge the British from this vital defensive and offensive base.

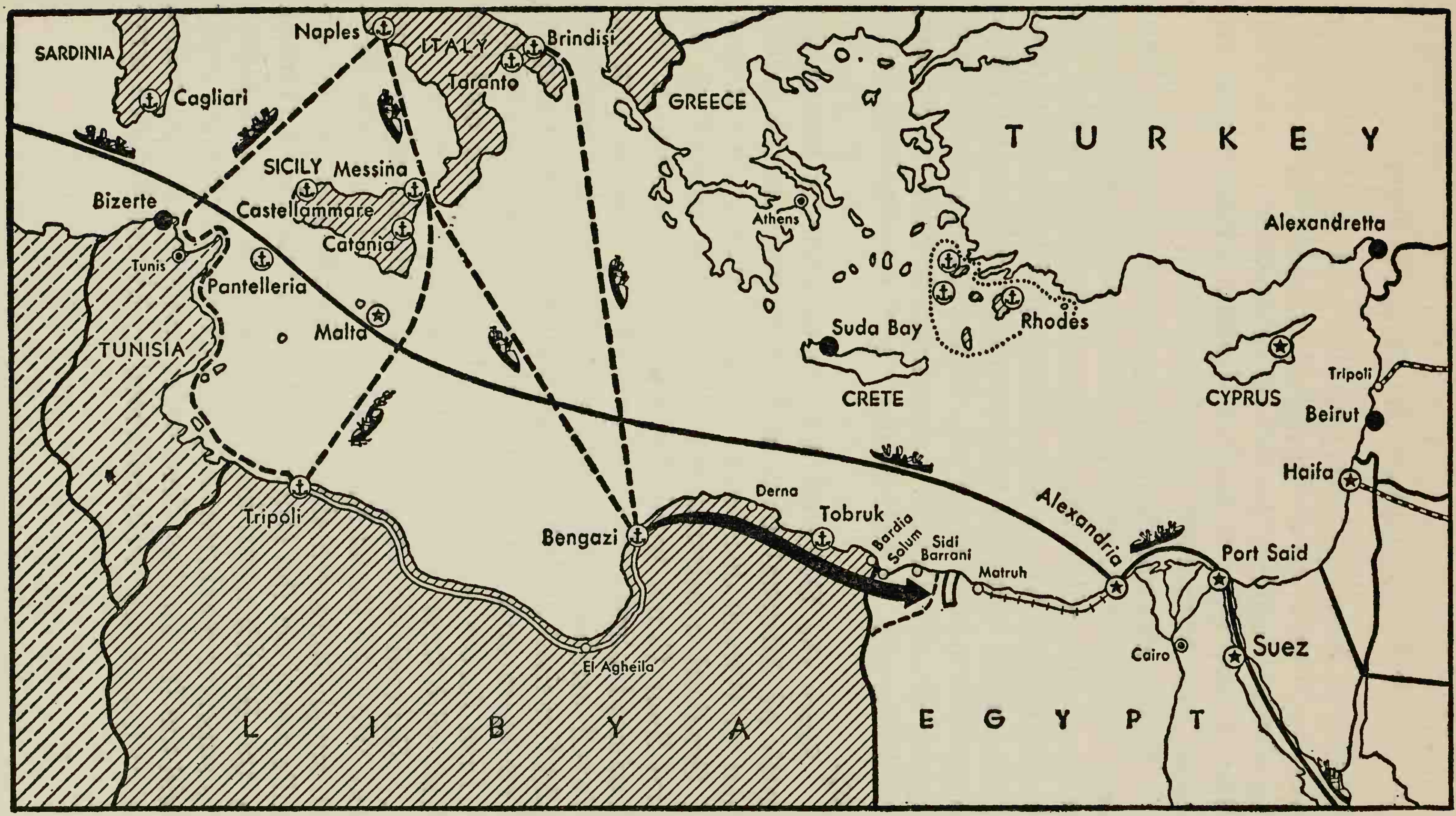
As long as Britain controls Gibraltar, Malta, and the Suez Canal, Mussolini's claim that the Mediterranean is *Mare Nostrum* is an idle boast. Actually the Axis shipping is bottled up in that inland sea and must fight desperately to get out.

The fall of France in 1940 considerably changed the Near East situation, which had formerly been favorable to the Allies. Italy chose the time of France's collapse to become an open combatant on the side of her Axis partner. The French force stationed in French Syria, one hundred thousand men with tank and air units, was no longer an asset to Britain; it became, instead, a possible danger. Italian Libya suddenly developed into a threat to the Suez Canal, and a grave possibility arose that Hitler might gain control of the French fleet.

French naval units in considerable numbers were stationed at Oran, in French Algeria, and at the British-controlled port of Alexandria, Egypt. Britain acted quickly to immobilize the French fleet as a possible aid to Hitler. They offered the French commanders the choice of fighting with the British as a "Free French Navy" or of being disarmed and interned for the duration of the war. The French at Alexandria chose internment, but those at Oran tried to escape to France. The British intercepted them and sank two battleships and one battle cruiser, with several smaller cruisers, destroyers, and submarines. The quick action of the British greatly reduced the French navy, once the fourth largest in the world. The ships that remained to the Vichy government would still be a great help to Hitler if he could get control of them.

At the beginning of hostilities in September, 1939, Great Britain's Middle Eastern Forces were commanded by General Sir Archibald Wavell at Cairo. By the time of the French collapse the strength of these troops had been raised from 30,000 to 110,000 by contingents of reinforcements from Australia and India. Since the French army in Syria could no longer be relied upon for support, this increase in strength seemed hardly enough to meet the situation.

The Italian field commander in Libya, Marshal Graziani, was a veteran of desert fighting in the Abyssinian campaign. Now that France was out of the way, he had no fear of attack upon his rear from Tunisia. With a force of at least 290,000 well-armed and well-equipped troops he was in a favorable position to take the offensive. On September 14, 1940, he delivered his lightning thrust at the British Egyptian defenses, striking with light tanks, armored cars, and adequate air support. The British had only a small frontier force because they lacked the transport to maintain a larger one; hopelessly outnumbered and occupying scattered positions sometimes hundreds of miles apart, they were forced to withdraw. In two days Graziani had pushed sixty miles into Egypt, past Solum and Bug Bug, to Sidi Barrani. There he was compelled to halt and wait for


SARDINIA
Cagliari
Naples
ITALY
Brindisi
Taranto
GREECE
T U R K E Y
SICILY
Messina
Bizerte
Castellammare
Catania
Athens
Alexandretta
Tunis
Pantelleria
Malta
TUNISIA
Suda Bay
Rhodes
CRETE
CYPRUS
Tripoli
Beirut
Haifa
Derna
Tobruk
Bardia
Solum
Sidi Barrani
Matruh
Alexandria
Port Said
Tripoli
Bengazi
El Agheila
Cairo
Suez
L I B Y A
E G Y P T

20. THE MEDITERRANEAN THEATER: GRAZIANI'S ADVANCE

supplies to catch up with him. He took up a defensive position and started to dig wells to supplement the inadequate water supply. The British defensive line was sixty miles to the east; a further Italian advance was expected (*see* Map 20, p. 113).

Egypt was not the only section of the vast British-controlled African area where General Wavell's forces were meeting difficulties. The thinly held British defenses in East Africa were threatened by another powerful Italian army of about 240,000 white and native troops led by the Duke of Aosta. This force launched attacks on the British possessions in Kenya, Somaliland, and the British Sudan, and was making headway.

Since the Duke of Aosta's movements lacked the punch of Marshal Graziani's campaign in the north, General Wavell decided to meet the greater threat first. If Graziani continued his advance the control of the vital Suez Canal would be jeopardized. Although outnumbered almost five to one in two fronts, General Wavell established a defensive line strong enough to hold Graziani at Sidi Barrani and proceeded to prepare a counterattack. In the south, the greater part of the British forces withdrew. The Duke of Aosta could be dealt with later.

General Wavell did not consider the situation hopeless. With the Royal Navy in control of the sea, the British supply lines remained open. The supplies for Graziani's army, on the other hand, were materially reduced by the British naval and air attacks on Axis shipping. By superior marksmanship and daring the British Navy held the Italian fleet close to its home ports. Meanwhile, Wavell was kept well-informed by his intelligence service as to the situation along Graziani's extended lines of communications and supply.

On December 9, 1940, three months from the beginning of the Italian invasion of Egyptian territory, Wavell struck with most of his limited force and with every weapon at his command. The surprise was complete. The Italians had the information that they greatly outnumbered the British in the north, and they also knew that the Fascist matériel was superior. Graziani not only felt that the British army was defeated but was sure that any possible attack would come along the coast, the traditional path for that region. But the British attacked from a point well to the southwest of the naval base of Mersa Matruh, about seventy-five miles from the point considered favorable for an attack. Wavell's move failed to make sense to Graziani; it was not according to the book.

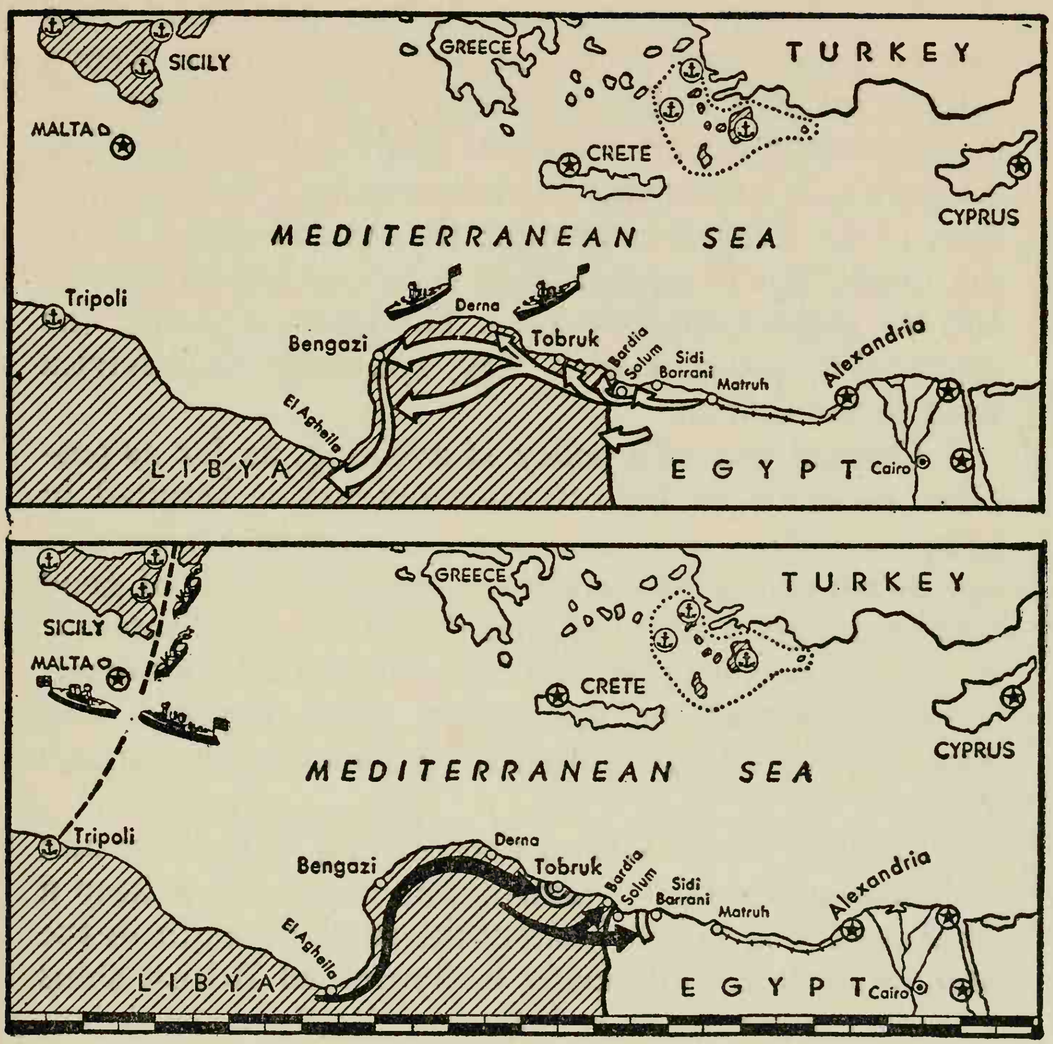
The Italians had not been seriously harassed since they took up their defensive position on Egyptian soil. Now British naval forces closed in and, aided by air bomber and fighter formations, blasted at the supply lines. Italian resistance was broken; disorganization spread almost immediately. Two days after he launched his unexpected flank attack General Wavell's forces had captured Sidi Barrani. The garrison surrendered, yielding forty thousand prisoners and a quantity of stores and equipment.

The light British losses and the weak resistance justified a further advance. Having established air superiority, Wavell threw his small mechanized force against the retreating Fascists in an effort to destroy the whole Italian army in Cyrenaica. There followed a series of swift enveloping actions like the one which took Sidi

Barrani (*see* Map 21, p. 117). Solum, fifty miles to the west of Sidi Barrani, was taken on December 14, 1941, Bardia, on the Libyan frontier, fell on January 6, 1941. Tobruk, a coastal city nearly one hundred miles west of the Egyptian border, was taken on January 22. And eight days later the British entered Derna, a coastal town about ninety miles west of Tobruk. Bengasi, about three hundred miles from the Egyptian frontier and the Libyan port nearest to Italy, surrendered to the British on February 7. Three days later, Wavell's forces seized El Agheila and halted. For the time being the Axis threat to carry out their "around the seas" plan was removed (*see* Note 11, p. 260).

General Wavell's success was a wonderful example of a commanding general exploiting to the limit the success of his initial operation. Marshal Graziani's army had been almost destroyed in a great Italian disaster. Over one hundred thousand Italian soldiers were taken prisoners; General Wavell had expected to take about three thousand. The great number of captives actually slowed up the British advance because it became necessary to convert two-thirds of the British water rations for the use of the captive Italians. Most of the Italian equipment was captured or destroyed.

So large was his theater of operations and so limited was his force that General Wavell had to take care of his constantly arising problems one at a time. In East Africa the British troops had been forced to withdraw before the Duke of Aosta. But in February, 1941, the Italian forces were attacked from four different directions by British troops of the Middle East Command. Since the British had to garrison Libya and to transfer


SICILY
MALTA
GREECE
TURKEY
CRETE
CYPRUS
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Tripoli
Derna
Bengazi
Tobruk
Bardia
Solum
Sidi Barrani
Matruh
Alexandria
El Agheila
LIBYA
EGYPT
Cairo

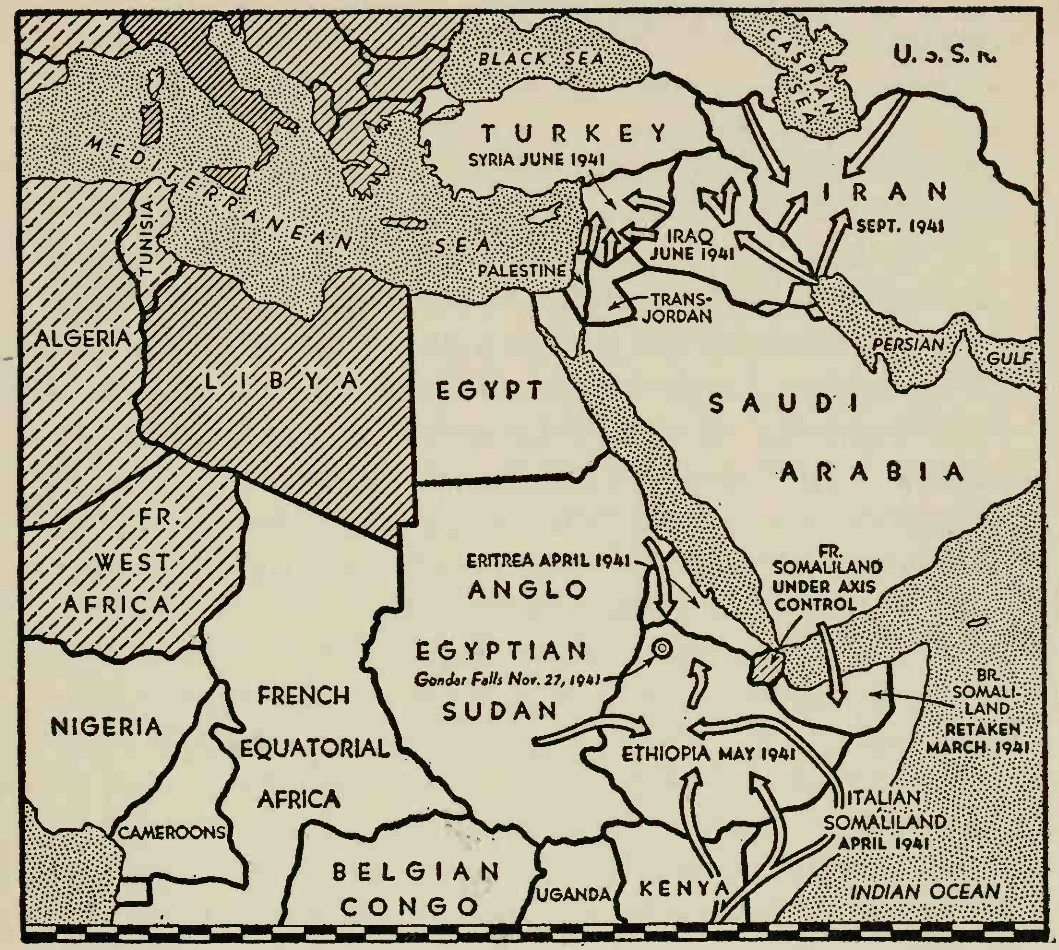
21. WAVELL'S OFFENSIVE: ROMMEL'S COUNTEROFFENSIVE

a detachment to Greece, the Italians again had superiority in numbers.

The British struck into Italian Abyssinia from Kenya Colony and from the Sudan. A second Kenya column invaded Italian Somaliland, while another column from the Sudan overran Italian Eritrea (*see* Map 22, p. 119). These operations were naturally much slower than in the Libyan campaign; the rugged character of the East African terrain made communications difficult and the going extremely hard. The Duke of Aosta was captured by the middle of May, 1941, and East Africa went to the British.

General Wavell's policy of avoiding, as far as possible, diffusion of his offensive operations resulted in complete victory over the Italian Empire in Africa. The successive stages of the victory were the result of good leadership, good training, and the will to win. Superior British sea power prevented Axis supplies and reinforcements from reaching the Italian forces in Libya and East Africa, a large contributing factor in the British victory.

As long as the Italian fleet, strong in tonnage and armament, remained intact, it was necessary to keep a British fleet of approximately the same strength in the Mediterranean. Thus many badly needed British ships were kept from the more important Battle of the Atlantic. The British doggedly kept trying to come to grips with the enemy, who studiously avoided contact and tried to keep in home waters. Wherever contact was established the Italians came off second best, and even home waters were no protection against British attack. One daring thrust was delivered against the naval base at Taranto in November, 1940. Torpedo-carrying Brit-


BLACK SEA
CASPIAN SEA
U. S. S. R.
TURKEY
SYRIA JUNE 1941
IRAN
SEPT. 1941
IRAQ
JUNE 1941
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
TUNISIA
PALESTINE
TRANS-JORDAN
PERSIAN GULF
ALGERIA
LIBYA
EGYPT
SAUDI ARABIA
FR. WEST AFRICA
ERITREA APRIL 1941
ANGLO EGYPTIAN SUDAN
FR. SOMALILAND UNDER AXIS CONTROL
Gondar Falls Nov. 27, 1941
BR. SOMALI-LAND RETAKEN MARCH 1941
NIGERIA
FRENCH EQUATORIAL AFRICA
ETHIOPIA MAY 1941
ITALIAN SOMALILAND APRIL 1941
CAMEROONS
BELGIAN CONGO
UGANDA
KENYA
INDIAN OCEAN

22. CAMPAIGN IN EAST AFRICA

ish planes swept over the base, sinking two cruisers, damaging one battleship beyond repair, and putting two others out of action for months.

Toward the end of March, 1941, a small reinforced British squadron had contacted a large Italian fleet consisting of three battleships, eleven cruisers, and fourteen destroyers. In a daring night action the British sank one Fascist battleship, four cruisers, and two destroyers. The total British loss was two planes.

Great as these British successes were, however, they were not decisive. The Nazi Stuka dive-bombing force began to threaten the British naval power in the Mediterranean. In January, 1941, a British convoy, en route to Alexandria, protected by cruisers and the aircraft carrier *Illustrious,* was attacked with all-out violence by a large force of Stukas. One cruiser and a destroyer were sunk and the *Illustrious* was so badly damaged as to put her out of action for several months.

German aerial successes enabled the Axis powers to ship supplies to Libya with large quantities of mechanized equipment, and strong troop reinforcements under the command of General Rommel went to Tripoli in March. Rommel, an experienced tank commander, had distinguished himself at the quick break-through into France at Sedan. German air squadrons began to be seen in force on the Libyan front. The British Libyan forces had been weakened by transfer of units and equipment to Greece. When General Rommel began his offensive in March, 1941, the greatly outnumbered British troops were forced to retreat. The British withdrew from all of Libya except Tobruk (*see* Map 21, p. 117).

The Axis force was brought to a halt at Solum on the border, partly because hot weather made further operations almost impossible. But the tropical temperatures had little effect on the besieged garrison of Tobruk. British and Empire troops engaged almost daily in systematic harassment of the investing forces, in spite of successive German air bombardments. They continued to receive their supplies, for Britain still controlled the Mediterranean.

While they were conquering the Balkans, the Nazis worked up a revolt in Iraq and began their same technique in Iran, farther east. In spite of General Wavell's success in Africa, the entire situation of the British was again definitely precarious. In addition to the developments in Iraq and Iran, there was grave danger that the Nazis might seize control of French-mandated Syria. There was no assurance that the remnant of General Weygand's army, under the distant and not very effective control of the weakened Vichy government, would put up any resistance to the Germans. A pincers movement, part of the "around the seas" technique, again threatened Suez.

In June, 1941, the British and the Free French moved into Syria. After two weeks of fighting between former allies, the campaign ended with the British capture of Damascus. About the same time, the British made a costly but unsuccessful attempt to lift the siege of Tobruk.

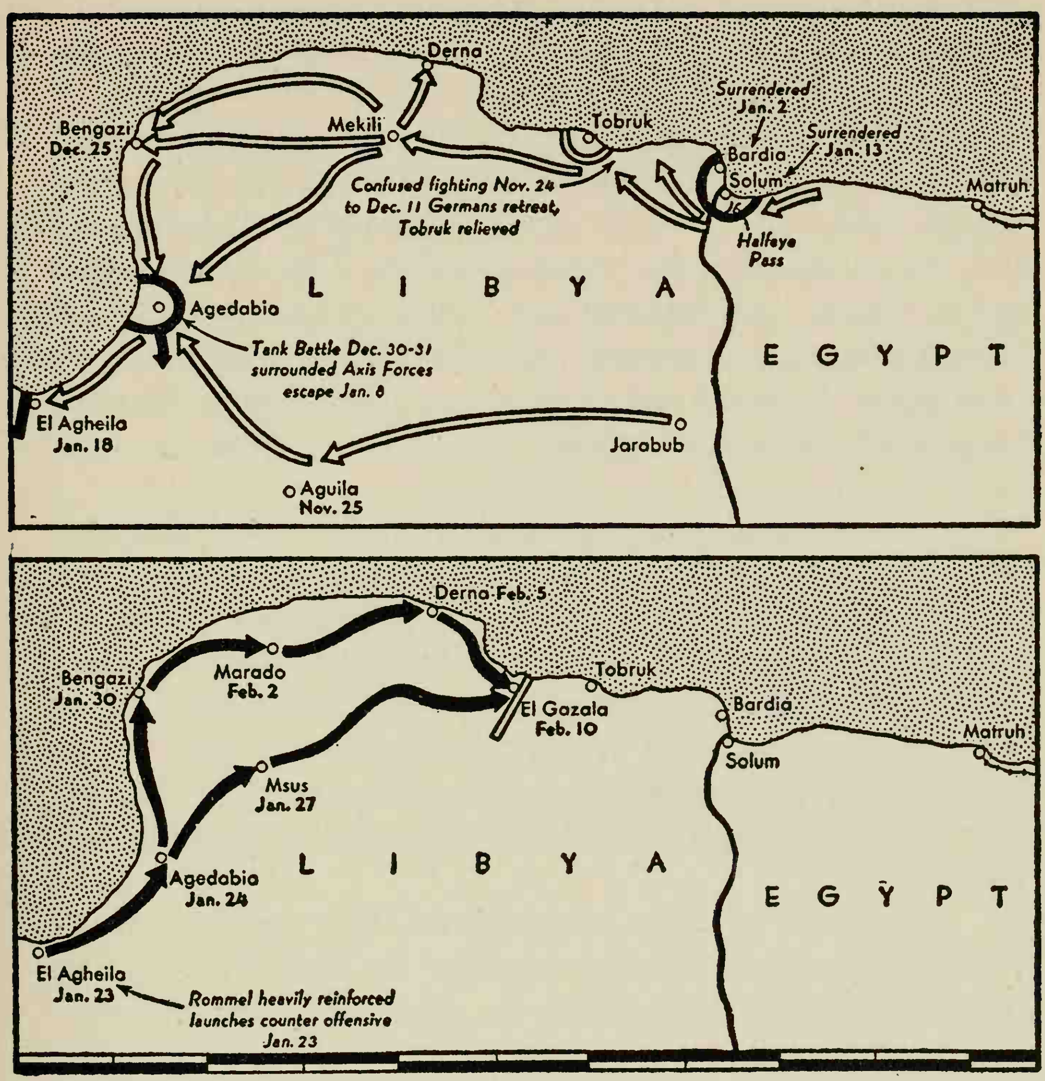
Britain saw the necessity to offset the Nazi activities in Iraq and Iran, immediately south of Turkey. Without much trouble, the German agents and their native assistants were driven out of Iraq. British troops moved into Iran from the south, while Russian troops, now in the war against Germany, co-operated from the north. The situation was soon in complete control of the

Allies. The Shah of Iran abdicated in favor of his son and a government in favor of the Allies. Britain was thus relatively assured of the security of the valuable oil fields and pipe lines by which essential fuel was supplied to ports in Palestine and Syria.

In the autumn months of 1941 more and more American-made planes, tanks, and munitions were reaching the British Middle East Command, and a new offensive against the combined German and Italian armies was prepared. In November, General Wavell was appointed to Britain's Eastern Command in India. In that same month his successor, General Sir Claude Auchinleck, began the new offensive under much more favorable conditions than those of the year before. Though not decisive, the early results of the attack were favorable to the British.

General Rommel proved to be a more resourceful tactician than Marshal Graziani. In spite of his masterly defense, the Nazi-Fascist troops suffered heavy losses. Their communications and supply lines became badly disorganized under heavy bombardment from R.A.F. bomber formations protected by fighters. The Axis panzer divisions made stand after stand and even launched counterattacks. They were steadily driven back across all of the ground which had been retaken from the British in the spring of 1940 (*see* Map 23, p. 123). But the British were never able to trap and destroy them.

At this writing (March 15, 1942) a decision in the Mediterranean theater of operations has not been reached. General Rommel, strongly reinforced (according to some reports, by way of French Tunisia), was enabled to strike back late in January and in early February, 1942, and the British were forced back to defen-


Derna
Mekili
Bengazi Dec. 25
Tobruk
Surrendered Jan. 2
Surrendered Jan. 13
Bardia
Solum
Matruh
Confused fighting Nov. 24 to Dec. 11 Germans retreat, Tobruk relieved
16
Halfaya Pass
L I B Y A
Agedabia
Tank Battle Dec. 30-31 surrounded Axis Forces escape Jan. 8
E G Y P T
El Agheila Jan. 18
Jarabub
Aguila Nov. 25
Derna Feb. 5
Marado Feb. 2
Bengazi Jan. 30
Tobruk
El Gazala Feb. 10
Bardia
Matruh
Solum
Msus Jan. 27
L I B Y A
Agedabia Jan. 24
E G Y P T
El Agheila Jan. 23
Rommel heavily reinforced launches counter offensive Jan. 23

23. AUCHINLECK'S OFFENSIVE: ROMMEL'S RETURN

sive positions in Eastern Libya (*see* Map 23, p. 123). However, in the course of these fluid movements, it is known that many thousands of prisoners have been taken by the British, and that the Italian troops, even on the offensive, appear to have no stomach for the desert ordeal. Although the Nazi mechanized equipment has been of high quality, American-made tanks and tractional units now used by the British forces in Libya are of obviously superior workmanship. This is also true of the American bomber and fighter planes with which the air arm of General Auchinleck's desert army is equipped. In his latest rebound attack General Rommel appeared unable to penetrate the British defenses as far as Tobruk.

The final development in this area will be influenced by many factors, including the true character of the German situation on the Russian front. Reinforcement of General Rommel in the air already appears to have had a noticeable effect along the far-flung Soviet battle line. The other Nazi reinforcements in the desert appear to be limited only by transport facilities and the chances of eluding British naval vigilance in the Mediterranean.

The view of some experienced observers is that the Nazi high command is preparing its traditional pincer movement on a grand scale in order to attain the Axis African objective. This movement would have to be executed in the west through Spain, whose dictator government is strongly sympathetic toward the Axis, and through Turkey in the east. The objective would be the destruction of the British Middle East Command and the capture of the vitally important Suez Canal zone, thus successfully executing the Nazi "around the seas" plan. Strong German air concentrations are reported in Italian airdromes, which are the targets of frequent R. A. F. destructive bombardments. One important obstacle in the path of Hitler's contemplated eastern pincer is Turkey, through whose territory the thrust would have to be delivered. Unlike Spain, which is expected to offer no resistance to the western movement, Turkey has never been sympathetic toward the Axis and might prove almost as difficult a nut to crack as Russia.

It is not the purpose of this volume to forecast the future events of the war. It is well, however, to consider the actions in this one area as a part of the over-all picture of the war. A pincer movement in the Mediterranean may be part of a plan that depends on the fortunes of the other Axis partner, Japan, in her aggressive campaign in the Pacific.

American-made equipment met German-made equipment for the first time in General Auchinleck's offensive of late 1941. Although the issue was not decisive, it did prove that American tanks and planes are equal and superior to those of Germany. Our production lines were already well represented on the field of battle.

CHAPTER VIII

THE WAR IN THE BALKANS

October, 1940–May 27, 1941

> I shall begin by giving you a brief outline of the aims of Germany's policy in the Balkans. As in the past, the Reich never pursued any territorial or any other selfish interest in the Balkans.
>
> ADOLF HITLER
> *To the Reichstag,* May 4, 1941

THE QUICK CONQUEST of the Balkan nations by the forces of Germany and Italy in the spring of 1941 can be understood only if one considers the widespread underground campaign of bully, bluff, and fifth columnist activities which preceded it. After several months of expert encouragement by German agents, pacifist and isolationist leaders assumed control in every Balkan country except Greece. This political disruption was accomplished before Hitler's military forces were ever set in motion. Singly and in rotation each country of the mountainous peninsula was rendered almost militarily powerless by the Nazi technique. German agents fanned into flame the hatreds and jealousies of the mixed populations within each country; they recalled to mind the former wars and the old wrongs that divided one country from another. This strategy of dissension was so successful that, when Germany resorted to armed force or its threat, the Balkan countries did not stand together. They were broken like sticks, one by one, when they could have bound themselves together in a league which might possibly have effectively resisted the German armed power.

The Nazi procedure included a program of intimidation designed to frighten the people into believing that they could not possibly resist the Nazi advance. Inspired articles in the local newspapers, speeches of the fear-ridden or bribed politicians, rumors circulated by fifth columnists, and the showing of movies depicting scenes of German might (like the German crucifixion of Rotterdam) were all part of this program. The course of these events was apparent to the outside world, but the Allies were unable to undertake any really effective counteraction. The Germans were setting the stage for either a bloodless conquest of an empire or an easy military campaign if it was necessary.

Various migrations and invasions through the centuries have left a mixture of peoples in the Balkan countries. A map showing the location of each nationality in different colors would look like an addled rainbow. In Rumania, for example, live large numbers of Bulgarians, Ukrainians, Germans, and Hungarians. The same condition exists in every country except Greece (although even there it is true to some degree). These mixed populations have been fruitful grounds for disturbances excited both by local politicians and by outside powers to gain their own ends. The existence of small groups of Germans in each of the Balkan countries gave Hitler an excuse to meddle in Balkan affairs and to create disturbances with his program for a United Germany and his theory about race superiority.

But the racial mixture was not the only factor. The Balkan countries are young; practically all of them have been formed in the past seventy years. Large chunks of territory were passed around during the many wars in which the Balkan nations have participated, wars with Turkey, among themselves, and the first World War. They are extremely jealous of the territory they have won or feel they should have won. Since the last war, Hungary has firmly believed that certain territory held by Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania, and Yugoslavia was rightfully hers. The Greeks held Salonika and the opening of the Aegean Sea, territory which the Bulgarians felt should be theirs. These and numerous other examples demonstrate the disunity of the Balkans.

There are about eighty million people on the Balkan peninsula. After the first World War, Rumania was the largest country in both area and population. Her people numbered nineteen million; but her position, as to friends and neighbors, was not enviable. She had obtained Bessarabia from Russia, the pasture lands of Transylvania from Hungary, and a block of territory from Bulgaria. She acquired this territory through having been on the right side in the first World War, not through her own military prowess.

Although primarily agricultural, the Balkan countries produce some iron, copper, and other metals. Rumania has large petroleum fields; these alone would have been sufficient bait for Hitler, needing, as he did, precious fuel for his mechanized army. But none of the nations had a great number of industries. Hence, they turned to the great Powers, to Germany, England, France, and Italy, to exchange raw materials for industrial products.

In the struggle among these Powers for Balkan trade, Germany rapidly forged ahead. The Danube was the commercial highway for the region; raw materials went up the river, and manufactured goods came down. Before 1914 Austria-Hungary had controlled a large proportion of the area, and German and Austrian bankers controlled its finances. Hence, there had been a long tradition of German business in the Balkans. A second contributing factor to Germany's commercial lead was her national system of trade. The individual business man in other countries was in competition with the German state rather than with the individual German business man; and the state was willing to sell below cost in order to capture the trade. The Nazis also introduced a system of barter, the direct exchange of German products for Balkan materials. In one instance this policy resulted in payment of several carloads of German aspirin for Yugoslavian raw materials.

Mussolini also had ambitions for an economic and political empire in the Balkans. His special sphere of interest was the territory bordering the Adriatic Sea. The invasion of Albania in 1939 was his first step of military aggression in the area; but he had long since captured the country by fifth-column infiltration and economic control. Mussolini's Albania was really only a feeble imitation of Hitler's Austria and Czechoslovakia.

The absorption of Czechoslovakia and Austria placed German armies immediately alongside the vulnerable borders of Yugoslavia and Hungary. Hungary's situation was difficult. On her frontiers she had no mountains or seas to be used for defense. The adjacent Balkan nations distrusted her because they believed she wanted the return of the territory taken away after the first World War. To quote a Hungarian, "It was Hungary's misfortune that she must be friends with Germany."

The German method of initiating the drive on

Yugoslavia was typical of the Axis fifth-column technique. The Croats, a large national group in that country, were dissatisfied because they did not have as much voice in the government as the Serbs. Using this political controversy, the Nazis attempted to bring about internal revolution, but they were only partially successful.

In Rumania the German political offensive met with greater success. At first, King Carol insisted on remaining strictly neutral, denying to the German tanks the oil from wells controlled by British finance. The Germans encouraged the development of the pro-Nazi Iron Guard movement, the Rumanian variety of Fascism, and German agents developed so much pressure within Rumania that King Carol was forced to release many Iron Guardists who were being kept safely quarantined in concentration camps. Carol's skillful acrobatic act of straddling the fence came suddenly to an end in June, 1940, when Russian troops grasped the opportunity to take back Bessarabia. The feeling within Rumania was such that Carol had to compromise more and more with the Germans in order to assure his people that he was protecting them against the Russians. In September, 1941, he was forced to abdicate in favor of his son, Michael.

Hungary and Bulgaria seized this opportunity to take back the lands they had lost to Rumania in the first World War. Germany took credit with Hungary and Bulgaria for righting their supposed wrongs and led them to hope that they would recover territory from Yugoslavia and Greece if they supported the Nazis. By September, 1940, Germany was exercising almost complete economic and political control over Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria. There remained only to gain this control over Yugoslavia and Greece. Then German troops could use the Balkans as a base for an attack on the main enemy, the British.

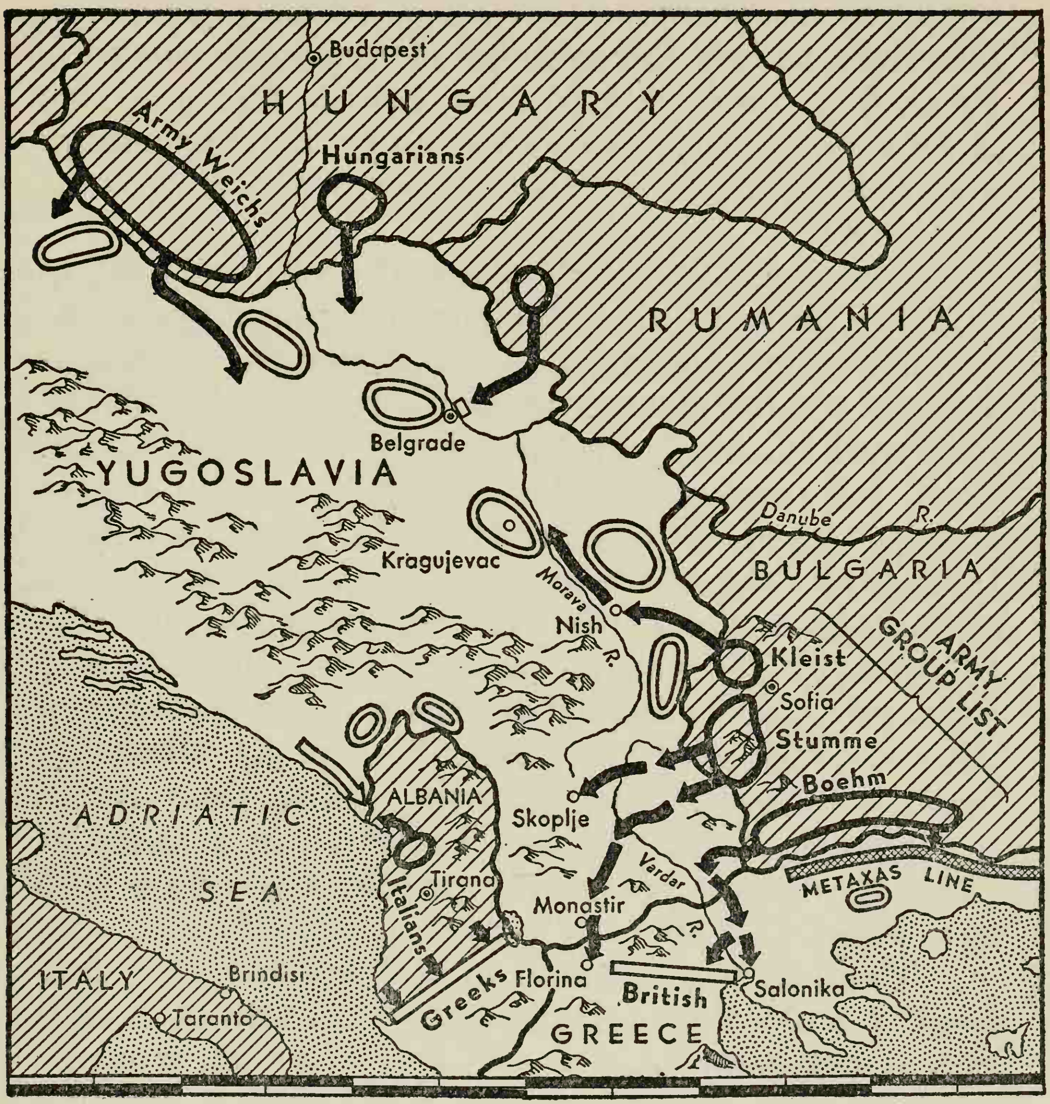
Italy's interest in the Balkans was less well organized than Germany's but it was more acute. Perhaps she feared a strong German position to the east. Certainly the division of the spoils in France had shown that it was not to her advantage to enter a campaign in its closing stages. Whatever her reasons, Italy launched an attack against Greece in October, 1940. If it were successful, it would raise her prestige in the Axis and would also serve to hamper the British naval operations in the Mediterranean. The Italians did not foresee any difficulty. When captured, some of the soldiers stated that they had been told they were marching merely to tell the Greeks a few of the fine points of Fascism; a bloody reception was accorded their academic mission. The British assisted the Greeks with some planes, and their Navy made the trip across the Adriatic dangerous for Italian troop transports.

The Italians based their operations on the Albanian seaports. Their main objective was the town of Metsovo, capture of which would have cut both the country and the Greek army in two. They pushed five columns through the rugged mountains in the direction of Salonika and the main railroad line to Athens. The blitzkrieg methods which had worked for the Germans in crossing the level farmlands of northern France in dry weather did not work for the Italians in cold weather in the Albanian mountain passes. Within two weeks the advance of the Italian army was halted; by early December the modern Roman legions found themselves in retreat, fighting hard to hold the key Albanian harbor of Port Edda and Argirocastro, an important city in the interior. The Italians settled down to hold their defensive line and wait for German aid.

Taken together, the military strength of the Balkans was considerable. Yugoslavia and Rumania each had peacetime armies of 150,000 to 200,000 men, and each had war-strength armies of about 400,000 men. In addition, each had trained reserves of perhaps 1,000,000 men. Bulgaria and Greece each had armies of about 120,000 men, but they had few trained reserves, since they did not have compulsory military service. All the Balkan countries standing together could have put between 1,500,000 and 2,000,000 men into the field. Their records in a long series of wars among themselves and as Allies to the great Powers show that the Balkan soldiers, particularly those from the southern and western Balkan countries, are hard and tough fighters. But the Balkan armies were poorly equipped, lacked tanks and planes, and were trained for the type of fighting of the first World War rather than for the modern variety of blitzkrieg.

Hitler had achieved bloodless victories over Hungary, Rumania, and Bulgaria. When he set his divisions in motion, only the Greeks and Yugoslavs remained to oppose him. Until the last moment it appeared that even the Yugoslavs would submit without fighting. But they overthrew the government which had planned to surrender without a blow and chose to fight. Their thirty-three divisions could not be considered as 100 per cent effective. They were below strength and composed of different racial groups who were not 100 per cent loyal. The German fifth column had done its work well.

Though not as well equipped as Yugoslavia, Greece was in relatively good military shape. Her seventeen or

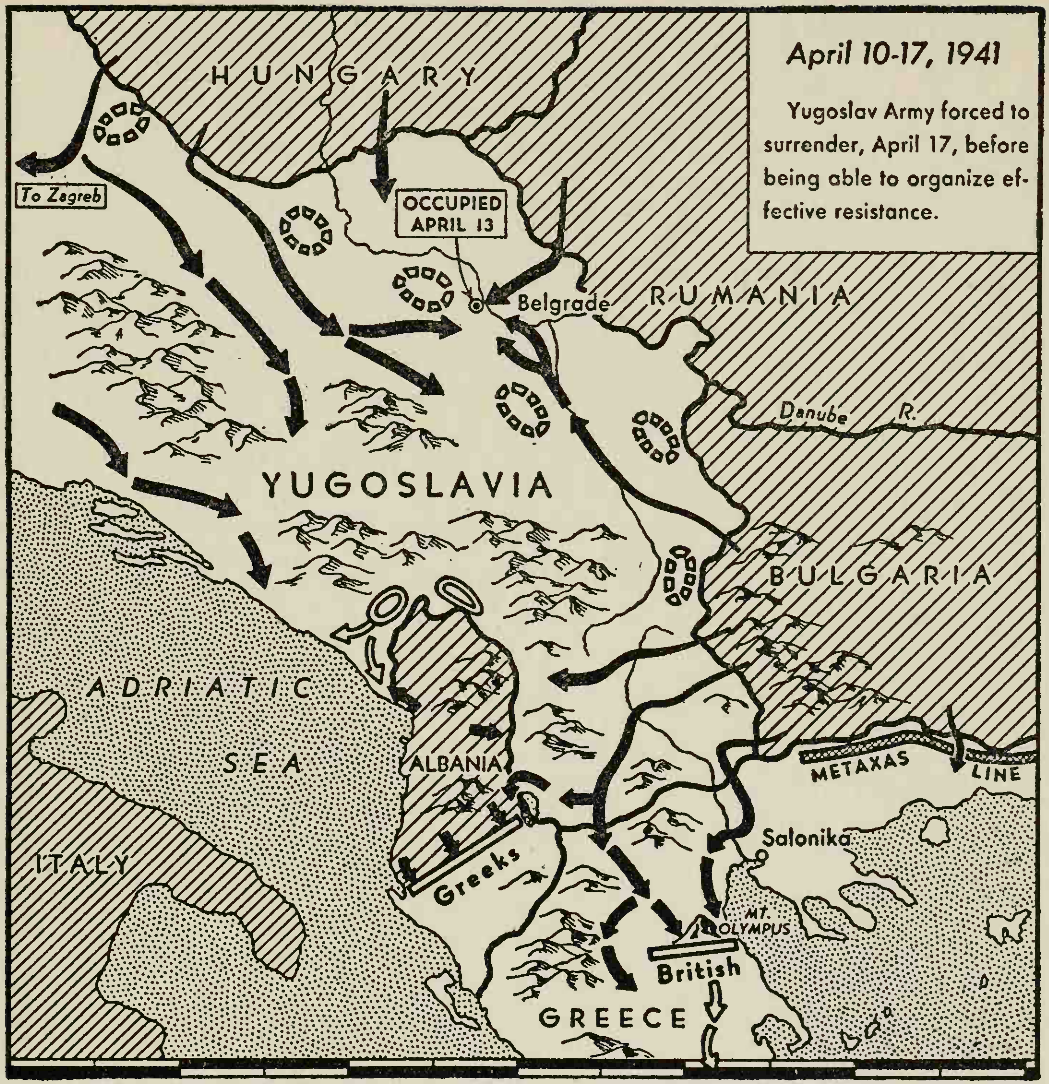

Budapest
HUNGARY
Army Weichs
Hungarians
RUMANIA
Belgrade
YUGOSLAVIA
Danube R.
BULGARIA
Kragujevac
Morava R.
Nish
Kleist
ARMY GROUP LIST
Sofia
Stumme
Boehm
ALBANIA
Skoplje
ADRIATIC SEA
Tirana
Italians
Verdar R.
METAXAS LINE
Monastir
ITALY
Brindisi
Taranto
Greeks
Florina
British
Salonika
GREECE

24. BALKAN CAMPAIGN, BEGINNING

eighteen divisions had been demonstrating their superiority over the Italians for several months on the battle line in south Albania. A second Greek army of four or five divisions held the so-called Metaxas line along the Greek-Bulgarian frontier. The British supported the Greeks with a corps (of two infantry divisions and an armored regiment) which took position southwest of Salonika.

Topographically the Balkans are sufficiently flat so that they present little difficulty in moving troops to the assembly points for attack. The northern part of Yugoslavia is also flat and has no natural barriers, like rivers, to be used effectively in connection with defense. Southward, the country becomes mountainous with ranges three thousand feet or more in height. In general, these ranges run from northwest to southeast so that armies coming from the north can find comparatively free routes down the valleys between them. On the other hand, any attacks from the eastward or the westward must face the mountain ranges and peaks which are hard to surmount. The Germans pushed their forces through the passes and then succeeded in a series of pincer movements which destroyed the Yugoslav armies one by one (*see* Map 24, p. 133).

The Yugoslavs planned to hold the border of their country, a thousand-mile frontier which, with the exception of 110 miles bordering Greece, was next to enemy territory. The alternate solution was to withdraw from the northern part and defend the center mountainous area. Poland had been faced with much the same problem of withdrawal; like Poland, Yugoslavia chose to defend the richest portion of her country, although that portion was difficult to defend. The events of the cam-

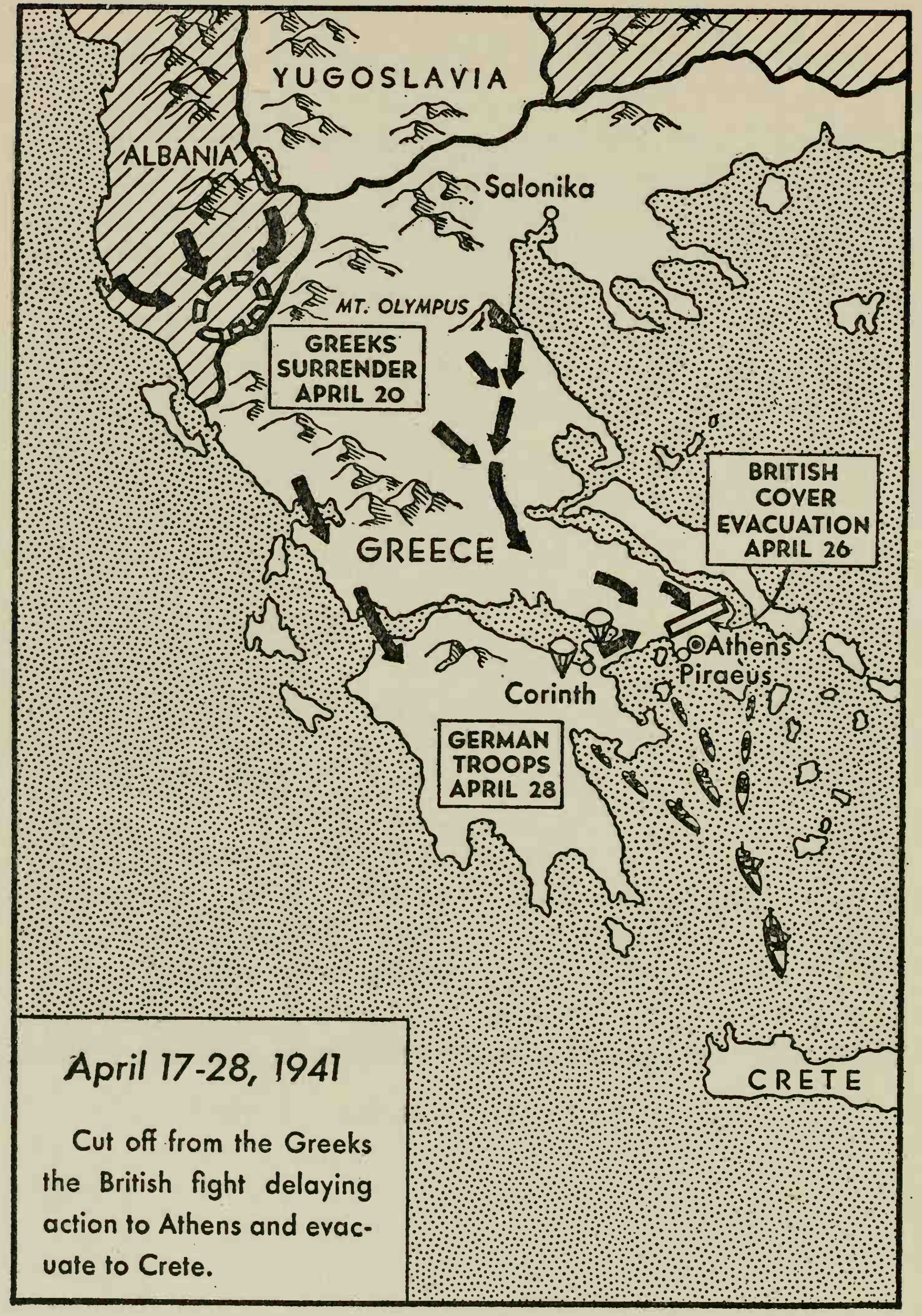


April 10-17, 1941

Yugoslav Army forced to surrender, April 17, before being able to organize effective resistance.

HUNGARY
To Zagreb
OCCUPIED APRIL 13
Belgrade
RUMANIA
Danube R.
YUGOSLAVIA
BULGARIA
ADRIATIC SEA
ALBANIA
METAXAS LINE
Salonika
ITALY
Greeks
MT. OLYMPUS
British
GREECE

25. BALKAN CAMPAIGN, SECOND STAGE


YUGOSLAVIA
ALBANIA
Salonika
MT. OLYMPUS
GREEKS SURRENDER APRIL 20
GREECE
BRITISH COVER EVACUATION APRIL 26
Athens
Piraeus
Corinth
GERMAN TROOPS APRIL 28
CRETE

April 17-28, 1941

Cut off from the Greeks the British fight delaying action to Athens and evacuate to Crete.

26. BALKAN CAMPAIGN, END

paign demonstrated that she did not have enough troops to do it. It is doubtful, however, that she could have held out long under any circumstances.

Striking from the north and east on April 6, German units advanced into Yugoslavia and Greece. By April 10 fast-moving elements had occupied Salonika and seized Florina, putting the Germans well in control of the Monastir Gap on the flank of the British line. By April 13, northern and central Yugoslavia had been slashed through by swiftly operating columns; Belgrade and other important points were in German hands. Thrace also was overrun. Nazi mechanized columns moved southward from the Yugoslav frontier against the British corps in Greece. From April 10 to April 28, the German advance was impeded by the excellent rearguard action of the greatly outnumbered British. Meanwhile, the Greek forces in Albania were being isolated. On April 24 they surrendered to the Germans. By the 28th all Greece was in German hands. The Battle of Crete was soon to follow (*see* Maps 25–26, pp. 135–136).

When Germany struck at Yugoslavia and Greece, she employed about thirty-two divisions, six of which were mechanized. The plan was to attack Yugoslavia from all sides while sending one army (General Boehne) against the Greeks from southern Bulgaria. In 1915, a portion of the Serbian army had escaped the Central Powers through Albania and returned again to fight in the Salonika area; in 1941, Germany's attack from the east and Italy's operation from the west were designed to cut off the Yugoslavian army from making any such retreat. In this plan the Axis was successful.

German air operations in Yugoslavia, under Goering's direction, were practically unopposed. Although much of the development remains obscure, it is known that the Nazi air units operated in close co-operation with the ground troops, as well as on long-range missions to important interior points. Throughout these operations dive-bomber Stukas quickly appeared wherever a German force was held up. They bombed out defense units holding the mountain passes while the German land forces pressed from the front.

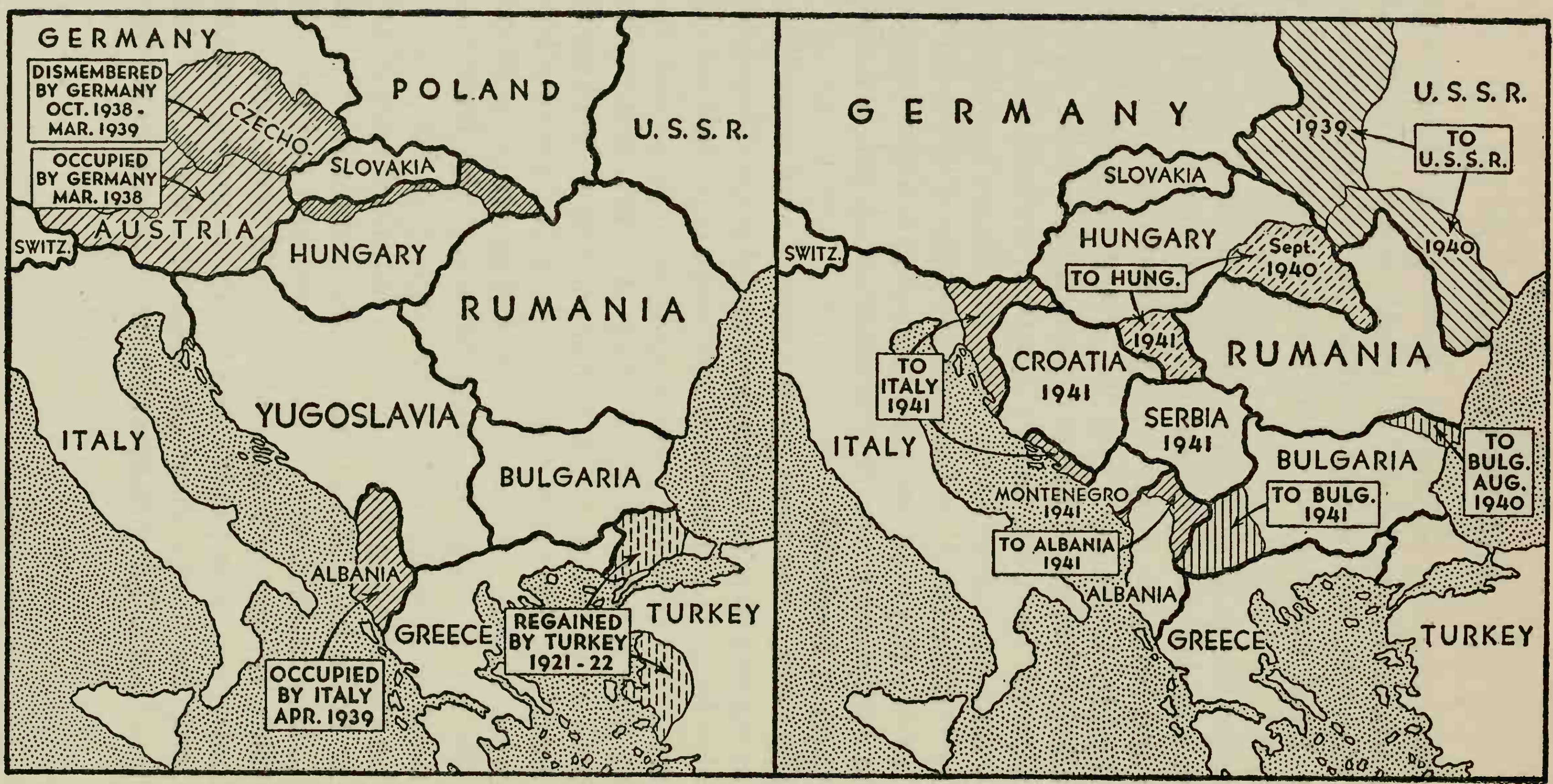
The Nazi armored and motorized units also played an important part. Panzer formations negotiated all types of roads. Panzer units overcame obstacles, rebuilt bridges, and performed feats of mobility which had been considered impossible. One German panzer division, proceeding from Kozani to Larissa in Greece, made a wide envelopment by way of Trinkala over trails which did not appear on any map but had been located from aerial photographs. Such feats could not have been accomplished in the face of a more numerous enemy; but where the only obstacle to be overcome was bad roads, broken bridges, or mud, the panzer units built their way as they moved. In this campaign, the Nazis followed their custom of using the armored units to exploit weak spots and attack the rear.

The Balkan campaign offers many examples to support the conclusion that the Germans loose their panzer divisions only against weak resistance. Against strong opposition the Germans throw the "good old infantry," heavily supported by the field artillery and combat engineers. The British defense of the passes during their retreat in Greece showed that the might of the German attack could be stopped in its tracks; the defense was crushed only by the use of outflanking forces. Even then the German advance was slowed to a crawl by the British demolitions. Properly used, dynamite is the greatest enemy of mechanized warfare. Infantry established in good positions, with determination and enterprise, can give a good account of themselves against blitzkrieg weapons.

After the fall of Greece, the whole Balkan peninsula was under Axis control. The governments of Rumania and Bulgaria were already friendly to and largely controlled by Germany. Since assisting in the Battle of the Balkans they have been compelled to depend on the protection of the Axis. Greece has been completely occupied by an Axis police force. Most of this is composed of Italians, but the German Gestapo gives them spine. Little reliable news has reached the outside world from Greece, but the indications are that the condition of her civil population is frightful.

Yugoslavia has been partitioned. The Croats have been set up as a separate kingdom under an Italian duke. Italy also holds northern and northwestern Yugoslavia. German troops hold the capital, Belgrade, and other important places. The Bulgars have occupied the southern portions of Yugoslavia, the rich agricultural territory east of the Struma River in Greece, and the province of Florina in western Macedonia; they want to annex all of these to Bulgaria. Italy annexed the island of Corfu and Northern Epirus (*see* Map 27, p. 140).

But the Serbs in Yugoslavia are still fighting. Many of their units had hardly completed mobilization when the Nazis struck. Some of these units escaped into the mountains, taking with them their small arms, ammunition, and even a few field pieces. With mounting success they have been carrying on guerrilla warfare from mountain bases. They have recaptured towns. Now they


GERMANY
DISMEMBERED BY GERMANY OCT. 1938 - MAR. 1939
OCCUPIED BY GERMANY MAR. 1938
CZECHO.
POLAND
U. S. S. R.
SLOVAKIA
AUSTRIA
SWITZ.
HUNGARY
RUMANIA
YUGOSLAVIA
ITALY
BULGARIA
ALBANIA
GREECE
REGAINED BY TURKEY 1921 - 22
TURKEY
OCCUPIED BY ITALY APR. 1939
GERMANY
U. S. S. R.
1939
TO U. S. S. R.
SLOVAKIA
HUNGARY
Sept. 1940
1940
SWITZ.
TO HUNG.
1941
RUMANIA
TO ITALY 1941
CROATIA 1941
SERBIA 1941
ITALY
BULGARIA
TO BULG. AUG. 1940
MONTENEGRO 1941
TO BULG. 1941
TO ALBANIA 1941
ALBANIA
GREECE
TURKEY

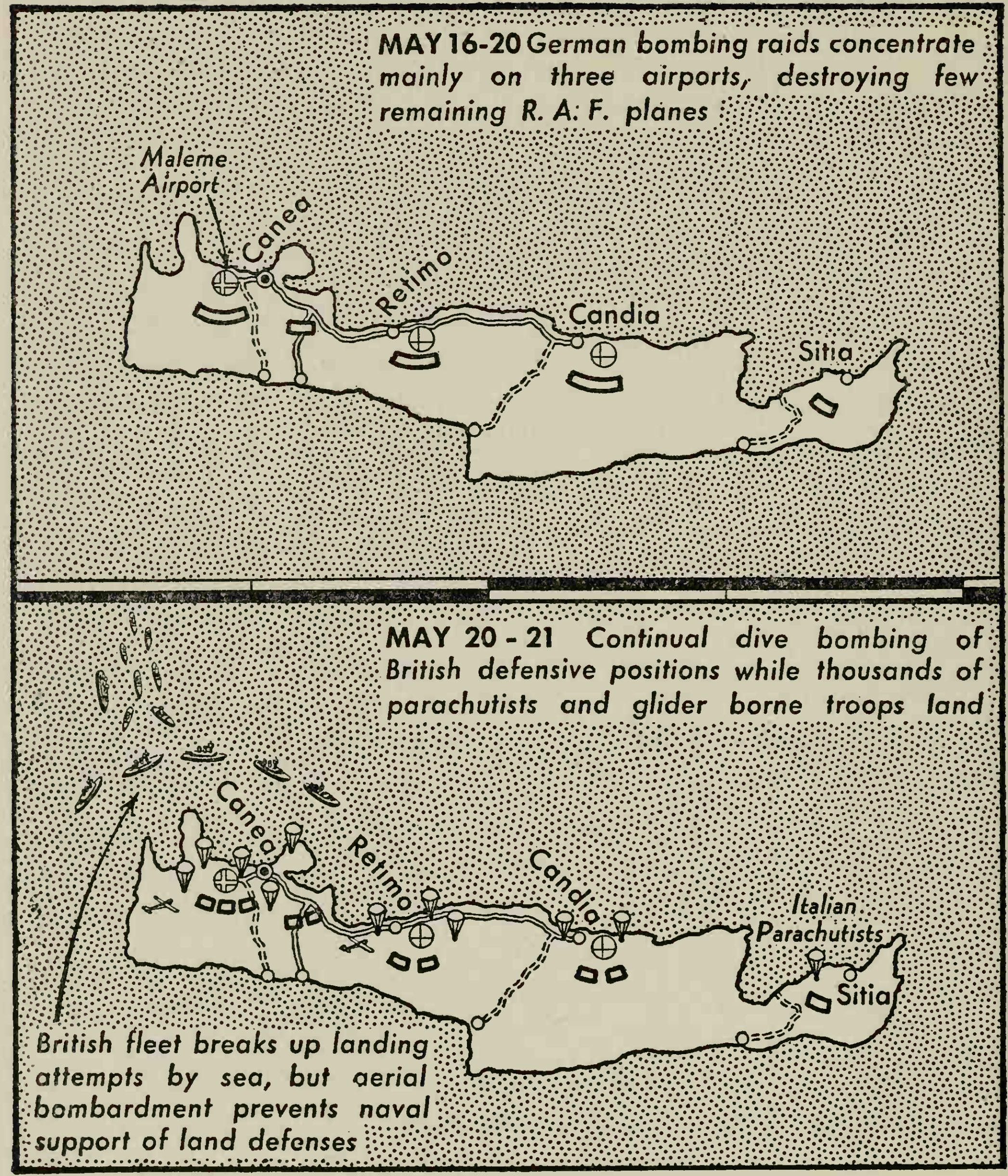
27. THE BALKANS, BEFORE AND AFTER

even have a high command which occasionally issues communiques. The Axis, which holds all the key cities, is resorting to reprisals against civilians, hundreds of whom have been executed; but the Axis has not been able to smash the free Serbs. In western and central Yugoslavia, the battle of the Balkans has not yet ended.

The battle of Crete began as soon as Greece fell into German hands. Nazi occupation of Crete was essential to the further Axis operations in the Mediterranean theater. It would deny the British a base from which to bomb Rumanian oil fields and Axis shipping in Greek waters, and it would restrict operations of the British fleet in the Eastern Mediterranean. It would also facilitate effective German air attacks on Egypt and Suez.

The pattern of the operations in Crete is familiar. The Germans concentrated an overwhelming air force in the airdromes of southern Greece and certain islands. A few days of intense bombing and machine gunning of the antiaircraft defenses prepared for the first landing force. The nearest British airfields in Egypt, 350 miles distant, were too far away to render effective air support to the British, and their weak air force in Crete soon was overwhelmed and forced to withdraw. Nazi troops first landed by parachute at 8 A. M. on May 20, and continued to land by parachute and glider until one of the airfields was captured. This move prepared the way for transport planes to land air-borne troops. These latter really won Crete for the Germans. Until May 23 the British fleet destroyed all water-borne invaders; heavy aerial attacks then forced the withdrawal of the fleet. The British decision to evacuate Crete came about May 30 (*see* Map 28, pp. 142–143).

The fight for Crete was a hard and close battle, not



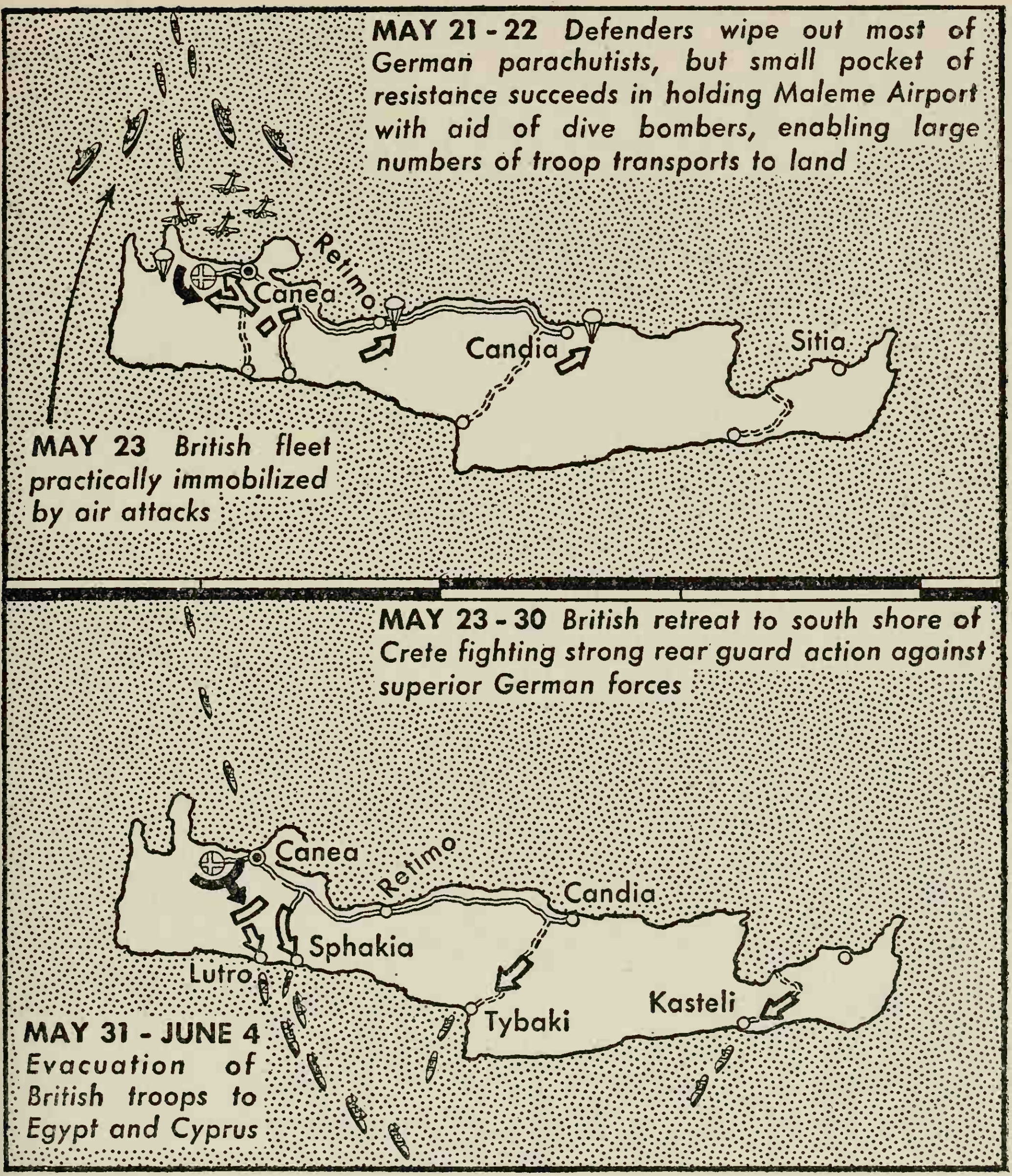
MAY 16-20 German bombing raids concentrate mainly on three airports, destroying few remaining R. A. F. planes

MAY 20 - 21 Continual dive bombing of British defensive positions while thousands of parachutists and glider borne troops land

British fleet breaks up landing attempts by sea, but aerial bombardment prevents naval support of land defenses

Maleme Airport
Canea
Retimo
Candia
Sitia
Canea
Retimo
Candia
Italian Parachutists
Sitia

28. INVASION OF CRETE: FIRST STAGES



MAY 21 - 22 *Defenders wipe out most of German parachutists, but small pocket of resistance succeeds in holding Maleme Airport with aid of dive bombers, enabling large numbers of troop transports to land*

MAY 23 *British fleet practically immobilized by air attacks*

MAY 23 - 30 *British retreat to south shore of Crete fighting strong rear guard action against superior German forces*

MAY 31 - JUNE 4 *Evacuation of British troops to Egypt and Cyprus*

Canea
Retimo
Candia
Sitia
Canea
Retimo
Candia
Sphakia
Lutro
Tybaki
Kasteli

INVASION OF CRETE: SECOND STAGES

the one-sided operation to which the Germans had grown accustomed. The Germans lost over four hundred planes, and they suffered about twenty thousand casualties, to thirteen thousand of the British. The operation showed that parachute troops are quite helpless if attacked soon after landing. Trucks can be used to move up reserves to attack them. Rifles and artillery are essential to the defending troops, and tanks are desirable. Quick and determined action is absolutely necessary.

In conquering the Balkans, Hitler lost his bulwark to the East. He lost any hope of further peace with Soviet Russia. Slavic Russia has always felt the Balkan peoples, many of them Slavs, were her kindred and that she was their protector. Hitler had pointed his armies toward the straits of the Dardanelles (which Russia has always wanted) and at the Caspian and Persian oil fields. It took no great amount of vision to see that the Nazi vise might soon be tightening around Russia from the southwest and the south. The Nazi drive on the Balkans was a signal for the Russians to intensify their preparations for the inevitable conflict. The Moscow government left no doubt as to where its sympathy lay. Within three weeks after the fall of Crete, the Nazi and Soviet armies were locked in battle from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

CHAPTER IX

THE BATTLE OF RUSSIA

June 22, 1941—

> I should like here to declare that this political decision means a tremendous departure for the future, and that it is a final one. Russia and Germany fought against each other in the World War. That shall and will not happen a second time.
>
> ADOLF HITLER
> *To the Reichstag,* September 1, 1939

IN POINT OF THE NUMBER of men engaged and the area of the battlefield, the still-continuing Battle of Russia is the world's greatest conflict. It is the fight of a great nation against the full tide of that German military might which has successfully swept across Europe from the North Sea to the Black. Only three Powers stand between Hitler and the domination of the world—the United States, the British Empire, and Russia.

In crushing Russia, Hitler would achieve two important objectives in the German march toward world conquest. He would eliminate any danger of becoming involved on his eastern front in the middle of an all-out attack on either the Middle East or Britain. He would gain also the raw materials and industrial strength of Russia for his fight against the industrial power of Great Britain and the United States. Hitler and the German leaders understand modern war. They realize that behind the airplanes, the panzer divisions, and the riflemen on the battle front, there is a battle of production. The Germans know that victory in the long war we are now fighting may well be decided in the contest between the steel mills of Gary, Birmingham, and Pittsburgh on one side, and the factories in the German Ruhr and in the lands conquered by the German army on the other. Hitler may have had a third objective. The quick destruction of the world's greatest power in point of size and population might have seemed to him an effective deterrent to American participation in the war.

The Russian people are not one single racial group. The U.S.S.R. (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) contains about two hundred separate racial and national groups, a large proportion of which have different languages and different ways of life. Most of the people of European Russia are Greek Catholics, while many of the national groups in Siberia are Buddhists or Moslems. The Soviet government has always discouraged religion of any sort as being "the opiate of the people." Since the outbreak of the war with the Germans, this attitude has become more tolerant. The Czars tried to Russify the whole mass of different nationalities; the Soviet leaders, on the other hand, have encouraged each group to keep its own language and way of life under a required uniform political and economic system.

The Russian leaders are practical people. They understood full well that the new political and economic system in Russia, the product of twenty years of experiment and untested in war, might not withstand the shock of a long war and probably would not withstand the shock of a possible defeat. The second reason for their search for peace was just as practical. Until the drastic change-over of the Russian economic system under the impact of the Revolution, Russia had been an agricultural state with little industry. Of her population of perhaps one hundred fifty million people in 1918, only about three million were factory workers; industrially, Russia had reached the stage of America in 1860. The major economic goal of Soviet Russia has been industrialization. The Soviet leadership had to build factories before those factories could produce the goods that would make an industrialized nation. Soviet leadership also realized that future wars would be wars of production, and it put the production of arms ahead of consumer goods. The Russian worker is willing and conscientious, willing to work long hours and to shift from factory to factory. Although Russian industry still cannot compare with that of the Western Powers, it has done yeoman service in the inevitable war with Hitler.

During the nineteen-thirties Russia offered to sign treaties and guarantees beyond the point to which any other nation in Europe was willing to go. She did not join with Britain before Poland was attacked, probably hoping that the British and French would be sufficient to quell Hitler. Russia was tireless in her preparation for the days of reckoning with Germany, which Hitler had planned since his nights in the beer halls of Munich. Russian industries were in production night and day to turn out needed war material.

The Russians constantly faced the problem of a two-front war. The Japanese on their Pacific front were certain enemies who, like Germany, merely awaited an opportunity to acquire Soviet territory. Japan's ambition was to slice away from the Russian Bear the whole area east of Lake Baikal. Some informed observers are convinced that the Nazi high command endeavored to induce Japan to attack in Siberia and in the East Indies simultaneously with Germany's thrust across Russia's western frontier. For some reason, however, Japan did not comply. At that time her war party probably had not attained the control of the government required for such an expansion of the national military effort, already under considerable strain in China. It is also probable that, having been spasmodically involved with Russian forces along the Manchukuo border for several years, the Japanese were better informed about Russia's actual strength than were the Nazis.

The German conquest of the Balkans made Russian involvement inevitable. Russia menaced the flank of any further drive into the Near East. Germany threatened to flank Russia on the south with any such drive. It was now a question as to which of the partners in the Russo-German treaty would first attack the other. Hitler struck at 3 A. M. on June 22, 1941, employing the customary Axis technique of attacking without a declaration of war.

When Hitler's great war machine jumped Russia on June 22, it was lacking in two elements of preliminary ground work which had prefaced all previous German campaigns. There had been no fifth-column activity whatever. There had been no opportunity to weaken the will of the Russian people to resist by arousing old distrusts and hatreds, by painting the Nazis as a wonderful new order, or by holding them up as an invincible soldiery against whom resistance meant certain death and destruction. The Russian organization against such activities was just as efficient as the German. Furthermore, there had been no opportunity to obtain accurate detailed reports and estimates of the loyalty of the workers and the strength of the Soviet regime. The strong secret police system and the quality of Soviet teaching amongst the Russian people had preserved absolute secrecy about all military essentials. Hitler's armies sailed out into an uncharted ocean of trouble. It is undoubtedly true that the Nazi generals were of the opinion, as were some other experts, that the Russian population would receive them with open arms and that resistance to German attack would be negligible.

The long record of military history definitely proves that the individual Slav from the Volga and the Don has always been one of the bravest fighting men in the world; when it came to saber against saber and bayonet against bayonet, he had always been at least a match for the "Aryans" from the Rhineland and the Elbe. The Russian military defeats of the past can usually be traced to lack of equipment, poor supply system, or faulty leadership. On June 22 the general staffs of the world wondered whether the new order in Russia had been able to produce the arms, the supply system, and the leadership with which to unite fine individual soldiers into armies that could stand against the German military machine.

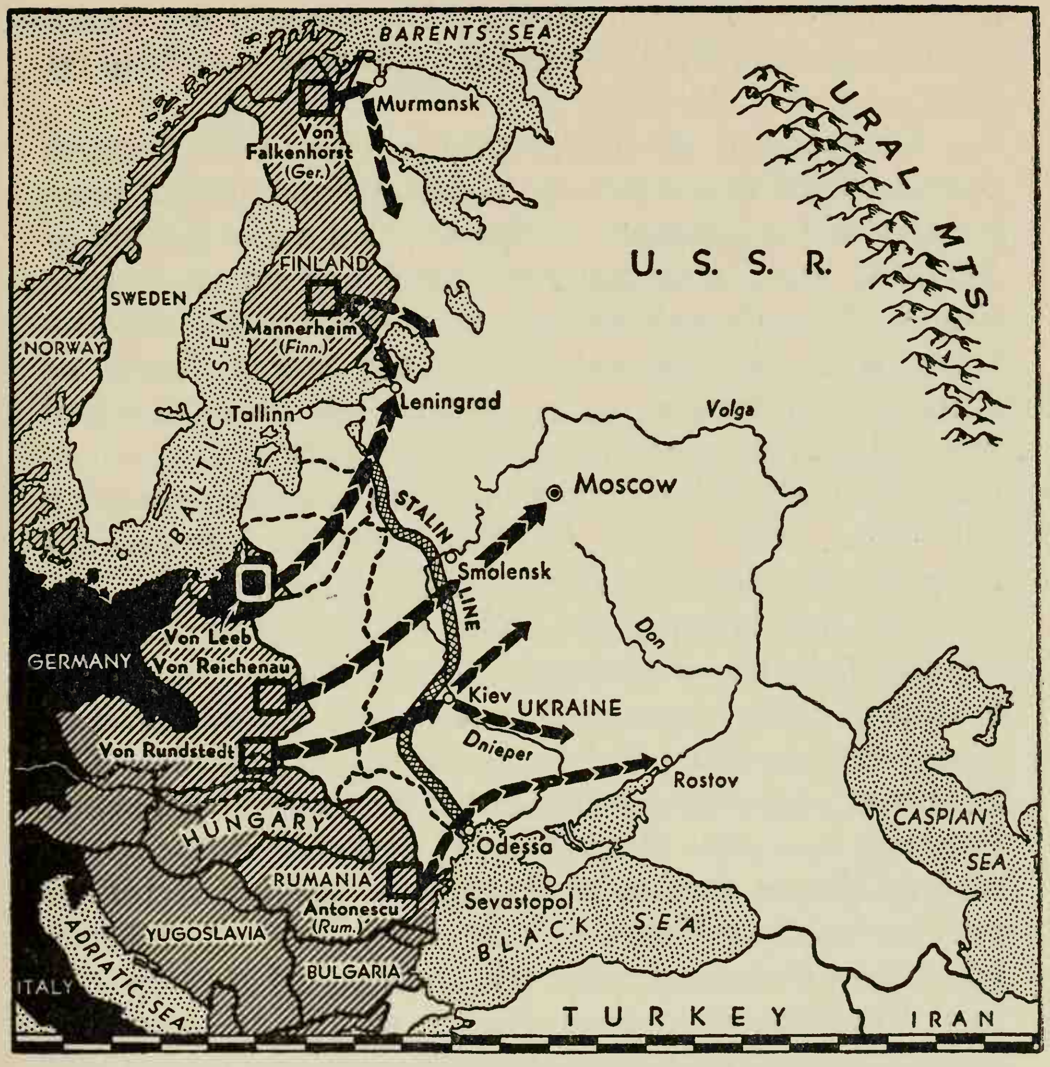
When Hitler's armies invaded Russia, they moved directly toward world conquest. Mastery of Russia meant mastery of the raw materials, the industries, and the granary of the Ukraine, all of them necessary if the Nazis were to fight indefinitely against the United States and Great Britain. Mastery of Russia further meant opening the gateway to the Orient and its easily conquered lands. To Hitler, bent on world domination, as to Napoleon over 120 years before, this was an intriguing picture. The underestimated Russian army stood directly in the path of the beckoning German goal.

The German war leaders moved on a front from the White Sea to the Black Sea, a battle line of almost two thousand miles. Hitler brought to this great battle about 180 German divisions, 20 of them armored. Added to these were 40 Finnish, Hungarian, and Rumanian divisions; for Hitler's allies were compelled to fight for him in this modern Armageddon. Some of them came willingly because they had long feared the Russians on their borders; some came because, like the Germans and the Austrians who had fought for the French Napoleon over a century before, they had no other choice.

The tremendous power of this attack can be gauged by comparison with the troops Germany brought to battle in the opening days of the first World War. Then she had a total of only 123 infantry divisions to fight both France and Russia; in the opening stages of that war she used only 11 of her own divisions with 38½ Austrian divisions against the Empire of the Czar. Against a new Russia, she moved with 220 divisions, as compared to less than 50 in 1914.

The Nazis had the initiative, which meant that they had freedom of maneuver and the ability to concentrate superior forces in the critical or decisive sectors. That there would be an attack was known to Stalin's generals; but the time and place of major efforts were unknown to them.

The Germans concentrated their forces in areas which favored attack on certain selected strategic points. There were three major and three lesser groups of troops, all with definite objectives. The three major groups took the center of the front. The Northern Group,


BARENTS SEA
Murmansk
Von Falkenhorst (Ger.)
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FINLAND
SWEDEN
NORWAY
Mannerheim (Finn.)
BALTIC SEA
Tallinn
Leningrad
Volga
Moscow
STALIN LINE
Smolensk
Don
Von Leeb
Von Reichenau
GERMANY
Kiev
UKRAINE
Dnieper
Von Rundstedt
Rostov
CASPIAN SEA
HUNGARY
Odessa
RUMANIA
Sevastopol
Antonescu (Rum.)
YUGOSLAVIA
ADRIATIC SEA
BLACK SEA
BULGARIA
ITALY
TURKEY
IRAN

29. THE BATTLE OF RUSSIA, ATTACK

under General von Leeb, drove toward Leningrad. The Central Group, under General von Reichenau, drove on Moscow. The Southern Group, under General von Rundstedt, drove toward Kiev and the Ukraine (*see* Map 29, p. 151).

Only one of the minor groups was under German command. In the far north General Falkenhorst, commander at the conquest of Norway, led a small army of Germans and Finns toward Murmansk on the Arctic Ocean, the principal Russian port of entry for supplies from Great Britain and the United States. North of Leningrad a Finnish army under their hero, Marshal von Mannerheim, drove southward over the territory taken from them the year before. In the extreme south a Rumanian army under General Antonescu moved out along the northern shore of the Black Sea.

The Russians met the attack in three groups, opposing the three major groups of the Germans. The Leningrad area was commanded by General Voroshilov. The center was commanded by General Timoshenko. The Southern sector was commanded by General Budenny. Budenny was later relieved by Timoshenko in the south, while General Zhukov took over the center sector. It is reported that Voroshilov is now in eastern Siberia, which may become an active theater against Japan at any day. The Russian government has maintained its policy of complete secrecy about the strength and movements of its troops except when the release of such information was considered advisable. Some estimates place the original strength of the Rusian army at between 160 and 170 divisions. However accurate the estimate of the German high command, Hitler met a greater armed strength than he had expected. The numbers of men and the quantities of equipment were large; and the will to give their lives for their country produced excellent morale in the ranks.

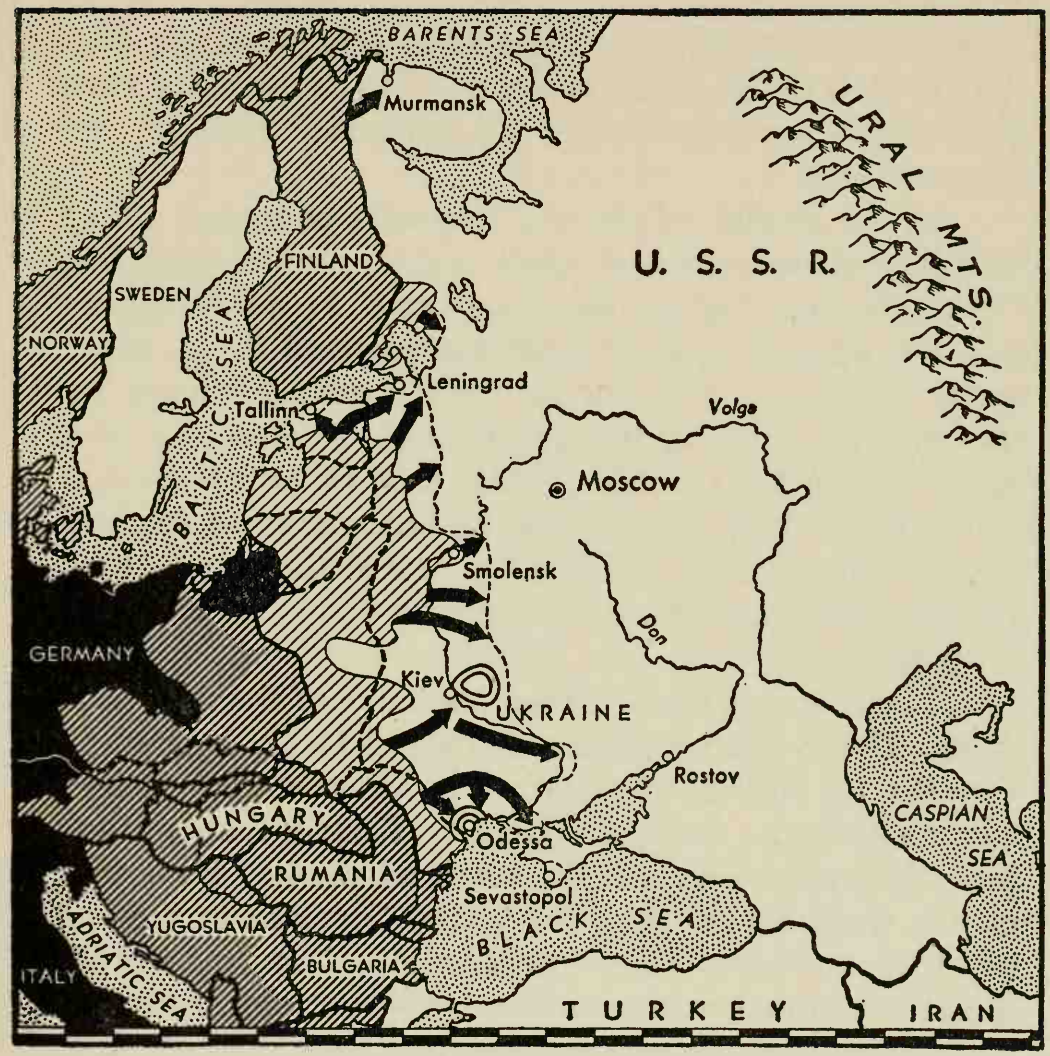
During the first few weeks of the battle the German line advanced according to plan. The Nazi soldiers, confident after many victories in the west, possessed high morale, and no one has ever questioned the excellence of the German leadership and staff. The Nazi troops and allies moved rapidly in the center and south; by the end of the first month they had advanced from two hundred to four hundred miles at several points. The progress in the far north was not so rapid. The important railroad center at Smolensk was occupied. The Stalin line, a series of fortifications in considerable depth, had been pierced in several places.

The Germans continued to employ the tactics which had been so successful in other European theaters. First came a search for the soft spot, or the creation of one by dive bombers or artillery concentrations. The infantry thereupon moved rapidly into and through the area. Then came rapid, deep penetration by tank divisions with the object of encircling the Russian army units. These operations were followed by the annihilation of the trapped masses by ground and air action. The Germans were applying the same tactics used in Norway, France, and the Balkans. There was to be only one battle and that was a battle of annihilation, terminating in complete destruction of the Russian armies.

At first the Nazis were exceptionally successful with this method of warfare in the central sector of their drive on Moscow. But as the German war machine rolled forward, burying itself deeper and deeper in the plains of Russia, it began to encounter new and disturbing kinds of resistance. When a Nazi panzer movement succeeded in surrounding an enemy army corps, division, or even a company, in Poland and in France, the operation usually ended in a mass surrender by troops who recognized that continued resistance would only mean annihilation. But Soviet troops who were enveloped and isolated by armored forces continued to fight, and in several instances they cut their way through the encirclement. The Nazis found it more and more difficult to encircle and digest the Russian units which, according to theory, should have been easily captured or annihilated.

Frequently the intense resistance of the Russian troops made it impossible for the German infantry divisions to maintain contact with their advanced armored spearheads. The strength of the individual Russian soldier was becoming more apparent and effective in the great defensive effort. Behind the Nazi advance lines, small mixed groups of Soviet troops and Russian peasant bands, organized to destroy enemy troops and property, proved a thorn in the Nazi flesh and greatly decreased the customary efficiency of German supply and communication lines. This guerrilla warfare, similar to that waged on Japan by the Chinese, was probably improvised strategy; but the Soviet government had long encouraged its people to learn the use of arms. It became more apparent as the Nazis advanced that the will to resist was present in the mind and heart of every Russian soldier, worker, and farmer.

But the German military machine swept on. At the end of July Hitler's propaganda machine informed the world that all of European Russia would be added to the swastika-stamped map of German conquest before winter. In the south, the Russians were pushed back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Smolensk
Don
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Rostov
HUNGARY
RUMANIA
Odessa
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Sevastopol
YUGOSLAVIA
BLACK SEA
ADRIATIC SEA
ITALY
BULGARIA
TURKEY
IRAN

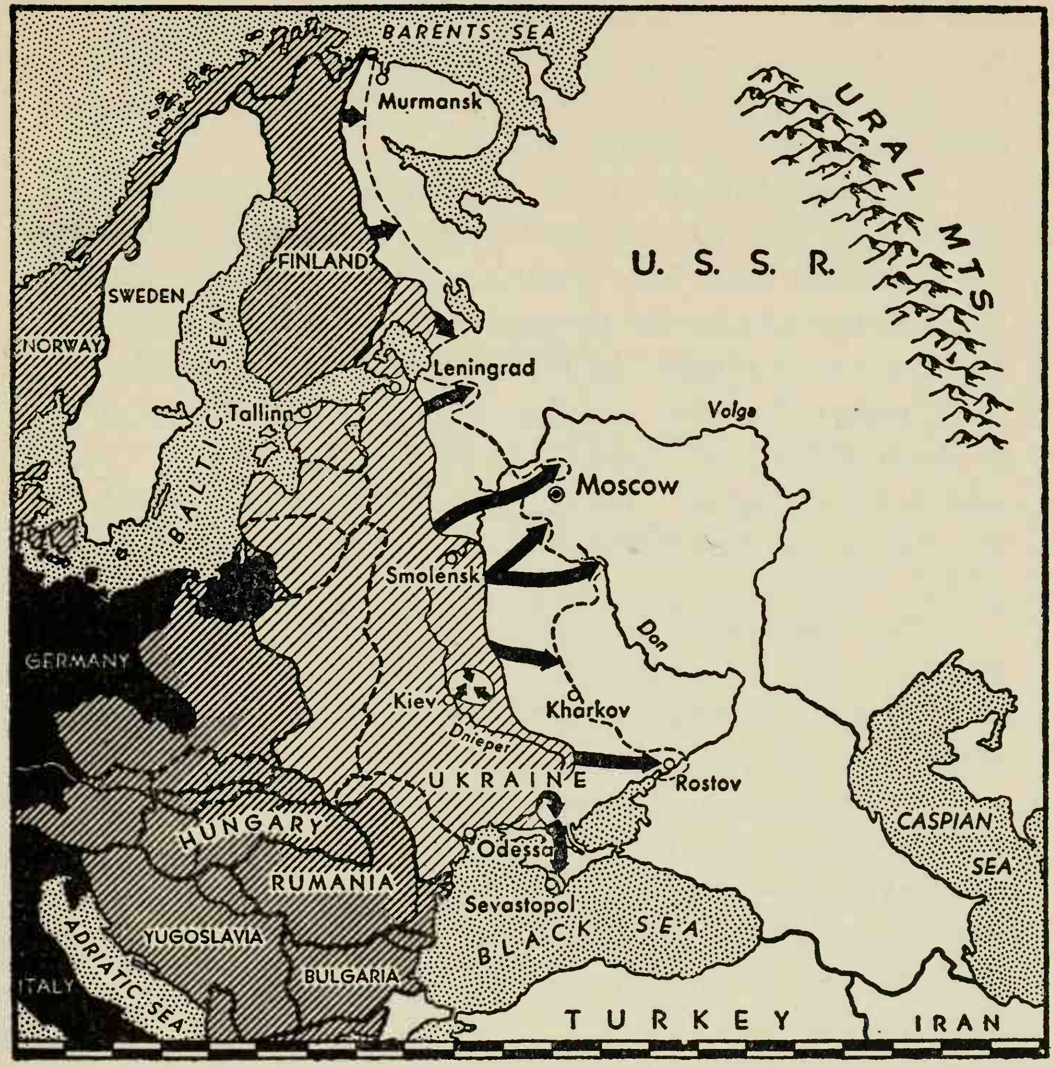
30. THE BATTLE OF RUSSIA, PROGRESS

across the Dnieper River. The Black Sea port of Odessa was in German hands. The Crimean peninsula, where the "Light Brigade" had charged over eighty years before, was threatened. At the end of this peninsula was the great naval base of Sevastopol. The Nazi allies were also advancing into the great industrial area of the Donetz basin.

In the north, where the Russians contested every German advance with all their might, nothing was left for the invader but the scorched earth. It would appear that the Russian general staff had planned for a severe winter without shelter for the invading Nazi armies. By the first of October, the great cities of Smolensk and Kiev were in Nazi hands. At that time Hitler announced to the world that there would be but one more decisive attack, then victory. He further stated that already all effective Russian military resistance was at an end (*see* Map 30, p. 155).

Moscow was the principal objective of the new Nazi drive. The Soviet government moved to Kuibyshev on October 17, but Stalin remained in Moscow and ordered a house-to-house defense of the city. Kharkov, about four hundred miles south of Moscow and the key industrial city in the Donetz basin, fell to the Germans at the end of October; but still Moscow was not taken. In the middle of November, with the Russian winter closing in, the Nazi army made its last great effort; they reached Klin, still thirty-one miles from Moscow. In the south, the Nazi took Rostov on the Don River, gateway to the oil fields of the Caucasus (*see* Map 31, p. 157).

It appeared that the climax in achievements of the Nazi military machine had almost been reached. The Germans had advanced more than 550 miles into Russia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BLACK SEA
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ADRIATIC SEA
ITALY
TURKEY
IRAN

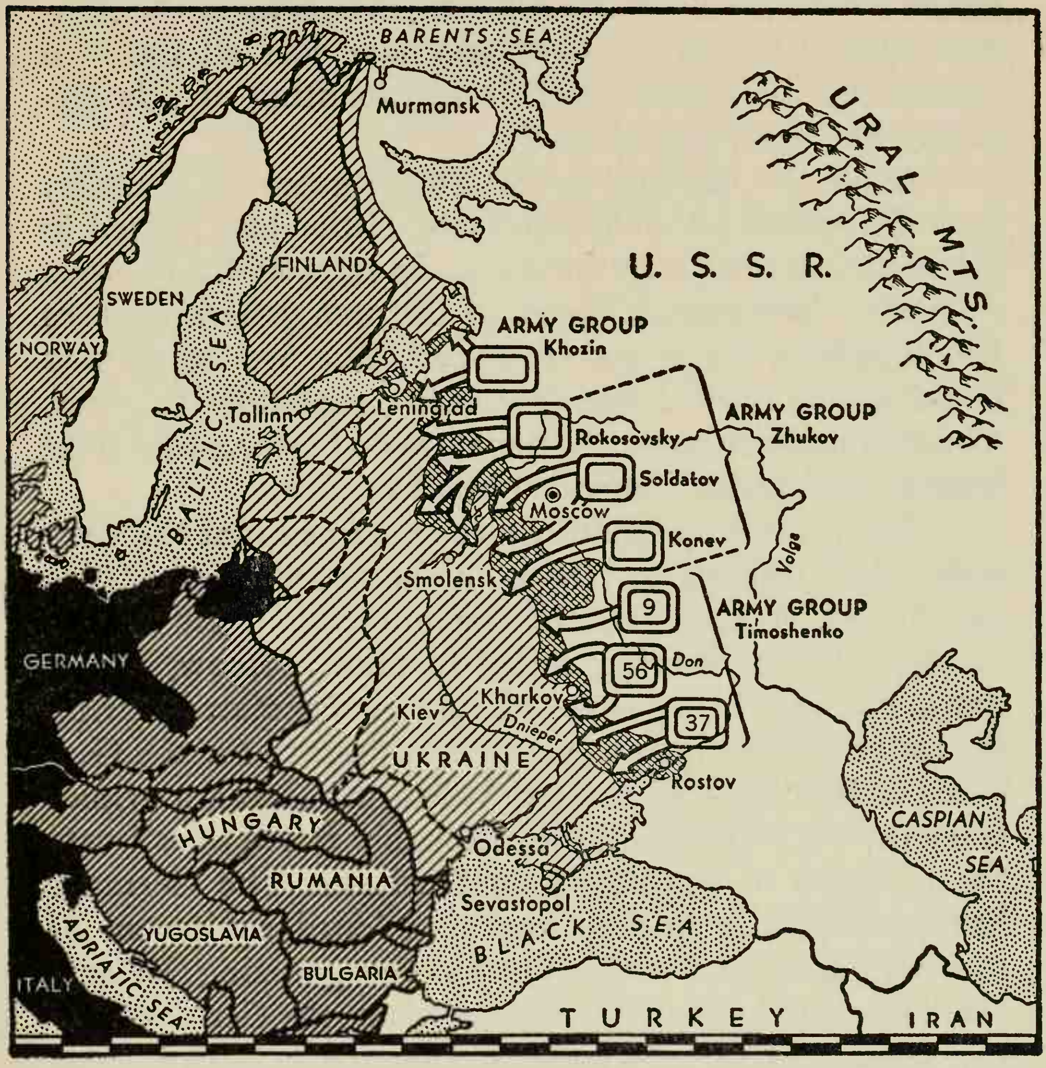
31. THE BATTLE OF RUSSIA, HIGH TIDE

and had conquered 500,000 square miles of territory. At this point the Russian armies turned. Not only did they halt the German advance, but they counterattacked in the first grim gray days of the Russian winter. With a strength estimated at three million, they struck back at the German war machine in a terrific effort.

On the southern front, reinforced by several divisions from Siberia, General Timoshenko inflicted upon the Germans their first great reverse of the war, retook Rostov, and forced the Nazis back along the Sea of Azov. Farther north around Moscow, the Germans were driven back under Russian counterattacks which were costly to both forces in dead and wounded. Outside relief reached Leningrad, and Russian troops took the offensive along the whole two thousand mile front (*see* Map 32, p. 159).

The enormous power of the German drive in the Battle of Russia must not be underestimated. The Russian territory conquered by the German military advance would be equivalent to that part of the United States east of a north-south line through eastern Michigan, western Ohio, and western Georgia. Nor can the will to fight of the German troops be underestimated. They suffered tremendous losses and still continued to advance. On the other hand, the losses of the Russian army as it had resisted day after day, month after month, in its steady retreat must be recognized, even in the admiration of its ability later to turn and successfully to attack an army whose high morale was forged by two years of almost continuous victories.

It is inadvisable to believe completely the reports of casualties issued by either side. The Germans have never been considered too careful with their figures; according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Khozin
Tallinn
Leningrad
ARMY GROUP
Zhukov
Rokosovsky
Soldatov
Moscow
Konev
Volga
Smolensk
9
ARMY GROUP
Timoshenko
GERMANY
56
Don
Kharkov
Kiev
Dnieper
37
UKRAINE
Rostov
HUNGARY
CASPIAN SEA
Odessa
RUMANIA
Sevastopol
YUGOSLAVIA
BLACK SEA
ADRIATIC SEA
BULGARIA
ITALY
TURKEY
IRAN

32. THE BATTLE OF RUSSIA, COUNTERATTACK

to their reports of ship sinkings, the entire British Navy and merchant marine has been sunk about one and a half times. There are no bases for comparison as to the Russian policy; but if the Germans have lost all the men claimed by the Russians, their surmounting of this difficulty has been phenomenal.

After the German defeat at the gates of Moscow, the high command announced that Hitler had retired to his mountain retreat in the Bavarian Alps with a nervous disorder. Then came a purge of German general officers which apparently is not yet ended. The first to go was General von Bock. Even the Nazi commander in chief, Von Brauchitsch, went the usual way of discredited Nazi leaders; his health compelled him to retire.

The Nazi propaganda office explained that the Germans were retiring to take up a shortened winter front and to shorten their lines of communication. This is undoubtedly true. Having failed to take Moscow, where the armies could be supplied and concentrated during the bitter winter, it was definitely necessary for the Germans to find another shelter. When the German armies started their retirement, they probably failed to estimate the strength of the attacking Russians. The Germans have paid dearly in men and abandoned equipment as they withdrew to a winter line for reorganizing. By surrendering the initiative to the Russians, the Germans lost the advantage always possessed by the attacker. They have also lost the reputation of having an invincible army. The Battle of Russia had ceased to be a "blitz"; it is now a slugging fight. In such a man-to-man affair the Russians are at least a match for the Nazis.

Therein lies the major part of the problem facing the Germans in the winter of 1942. The Russians were prepared for the winter; the Germans were not. Depending almost entirely on mechanized equipment, the Germans found their army beset by freezing temperatures, which attacked both men and machines, and by clinging mud under the trampled snow, mud which stalled tanks, trucks, men, and planes. It is true that the same conditions beset the Russians; but they were better prepared with winter equipment and substitute transportation.

In the Battle of Russia the German tactics and strategy do not appear to have been different from other campaigns. The German attack sought to infiltrate between the Russian positions in order to isolate them, and to apply pressure from all sides. Assault units, reinforced by tanks, were to outflank Russian strong points, leaving the task of attacking them to the infantry. Armored and motorized units were pushed through soft spots to disrupt enemy formations and to capture their objectives in the rear. Other troops maintained frontal pressure to hold the enemy in position.

The Russian defense against these tactics has been compared to a sponge which allowed the Nazi units to penetrate certain distances without determined Russian resistance. Here the distances in Russia helped; at times the armored spearhead was as much as fifty miles ahead of its support. Then the Russians, at the proper time, attacked the columns in front, rear, and flank. The net result of this type of modern war is that there is no longer a static line of battle; instead there is a war of maneuver. Taking into account the enormous importance of air power, the battle is now fought by large forces in an extensive area of many square miles, and at altitudes up to thirty thousand feet. Every unit, even down to the individual soldier, can be attacked at any time from above, front, flanks, and rear. Much of the Russian success can be credited to the fact that the Russians were willing and able to meet a fluid attack with a fluid defense, matching the German drive with a resistance the Germans themselves might have designed.

In view of the successful operations of German air forces in other theaters, it is strange that the Luftwaffe did not or could not guarantee victory in Russia. The answer is wrapped in the secrecy with which the Russians so effectively guard their military operations. Early in the Russian campaign, the Nazis boasted officially that Russia had only 6000 first-line planes and that 4107 had been shot down in the first six days of the war. Despite these alleged large Russian losses, the Luftwaffe never succeeded in driving the underestimated Russian air force units from the skies. If reports from the eastern front today are reasonably correct, the Russians can still effectively oppose Goering's air force.

Many observers draw a parallel between the campaign of Hitler in 1941-1942 and that of Napoleon in 1812. There are many similarities between them. Both initiated a main advance on Moscow and another on Leningrad (St. Petersburg, in the days of Napoleon). Napoleon was defeated by his failure to do three things: supply his army, encircle the Russians, and force them to a decisive battle and subsequent annihilation. Hitler has failed in the latter respects; and the present withdrawal of his major front seems to be an effort to shorten his supply line while keeping a minimum of troops deep in Russia. In both campaigns the Russians adopted the same tactics, withdrawing with stubborn resistance to a point deep in Russia where the enemy, of necessity, is weakened and extended, and then launching a counter-drive with superior masses of man power. There are only two differences between the campaigns of Hitler and Napoleon. Napoleon sent no troops south of the Pripet Marshes, which extend from northeastern Poland eastward to the Dnieper River. And Napoleon took Moscow in eighty days. Hitler is still without Moscow after more than twice that time.

The world gains two lessons from the Battle of Russia. The first is that the price the German people are willing to pay in men and material for victory over Russia clearly indicates that no price is too great to pay for the Nazi dream of world conquest. The second is that the Russian will to resist has never faltered; the land has been taken without the people; the formula for victory over aggression lies in the grim determination of the Russian people to give energy, property, and lives in the defense of their country.

Germany may well strike at Russia when spring comes into the land. Her faculties of material recuperation may be greater than those of Russia, even though the industries of the Volga and the Urals are beyond the reach of German forces. Germany may drain her man power to match the huge reservoir which has hardly been tapped in Russia. Or Germany may give up the fight, leaving Russia to refit her scorched earth in peace while the Nazi hordes move to new fronts. But whatever the future brings, Russia stood as a bulwark in a dark time. Whatever the outcome of the Battle of Russia, that stand was a victory.

CHAPTER X

THE PATH TO WORLD WAR IN THE FAR EAST

1931–1937

> In the future, if we want to control China, we must first crush the United States just as in the past we had to fight in the Russo-Japanese War. But in order to conquer China we must first conquer Manchuria and Mongolia. In order to conquer the world, we must first conquer China.
>
> BARON GIICHI TANAKA
> *Memorial for the Emperor,* July 25, 1927

IT IS HARD FOR MANY PEOPLE to understand why Japan took the apparently suicidal step of attacking the United States. It is clear now that Japan had long planned her aggression, but even those who had a healthy respect for German military power did not think that Japan was strong enough to attack America. The basic error was that we did not understand the real nature of Japan and the character of her ruling class. Japan's ruling class had to attack America or relinquish its power.

When Japan opened her doors to the Western world in the nineteenth century, she was faced with two possibilities. She could become a colony of one of the great empires; or she could herself become an independent Power by adopting those things which made the Western Powers so strong. With American encouragement and assistance, a small group of powerful Japanese forced their country to adopt Western forms of reorganization at enormous speed. They introduced Western methods of administration and crushed the clans who opposed them. They modernized the system of taxation. They extended the money economy, and they encouraged and financed the development of industry and commerce. They introduced national education; they built lines of communication. They gave Japan a highly centralized form of government.

Within certain limits, Japan had a constitutional form of government; but it was not like that of the United States. Japan's army and navy were placed outside of the control of the cabinet and parliament and under the sole control of the emperor. Since it could not be expected that a divine personage should concern himself with a mere governmental department, the army and navy, with their capitalist backers, assumed almost complete control of the government. Thus, militarism is part of the political life of the country.

Japanese militarism is at the base of Japanese imperialism. Prolonged peace is the only danger to the prestige and position of the ranking officers in the Japanese armed forces and their political and commercial allies. To maintain their prestige at home they must wage war abroad. They brook no opposition to their plans (*see* Note 12, p. 262).

A second contributing factor to Japanese imperialism is the poverty of the Japanese workers. Under an oppressive social system more than half of the wealth of Japan is in the hands of a few families of the ruling group. Like England, industrialized Japan depends heavily on raw materials imported from abroad and paid for by manufactured goods. To solve the problem of poverty would require a complete change in the social system and a peaceful and prosperous overseas trade. As long as the Japanese worker remains poor his labor is cheap, and Japanese goods can undersell those of other countries. Trade barriers spring up to protect home industry. The ruling class uses these trade barriers as excuses for imperialism, for expansion to acquire both the sources of raw materials and the markets for manufactured goods.

The third contributing factor is Japan's Messianic complex. The Japanese people worship their emperor as a deity; to die for him merits eternal life hereafter. They are taught to believe that they have a divine mission to rule, similar to the idea of "the white man's burden" or "manifest destiny" (*see* Note 13, p. 262). The concept of the divine mission is disseminated by the whole educational system and backed by the national religion. It was developed out of isolation, not from contact with the world. When conditions at home get too bad, the ruling class can always lead the country into war by invoking the divine Japanese mission to rule.

The larger and potentially more powerful nation in the Far East was China. Opened to Western trade a little before Japan, China had been content to go the way of centuries, to become a trading colony for the Western Powers. Even after the Chinese Revolution of 1911 and the subsequent years of the Chinese Republic, China was not a unified nation. Largely agricultural, rich in resources, she was the fair ground of exploitation for the Powers of the world.

Under the Nationalist Government of General Chiang Kai-shek, China began to wake from the sleep of the centuries. A growing spirit of nationalism became evident. The beginnings of industrialization began to come to China. Her warring factions were being subdued, one by one. Her armed forces were assuming proportions. A national and unified China was beginning to appear.

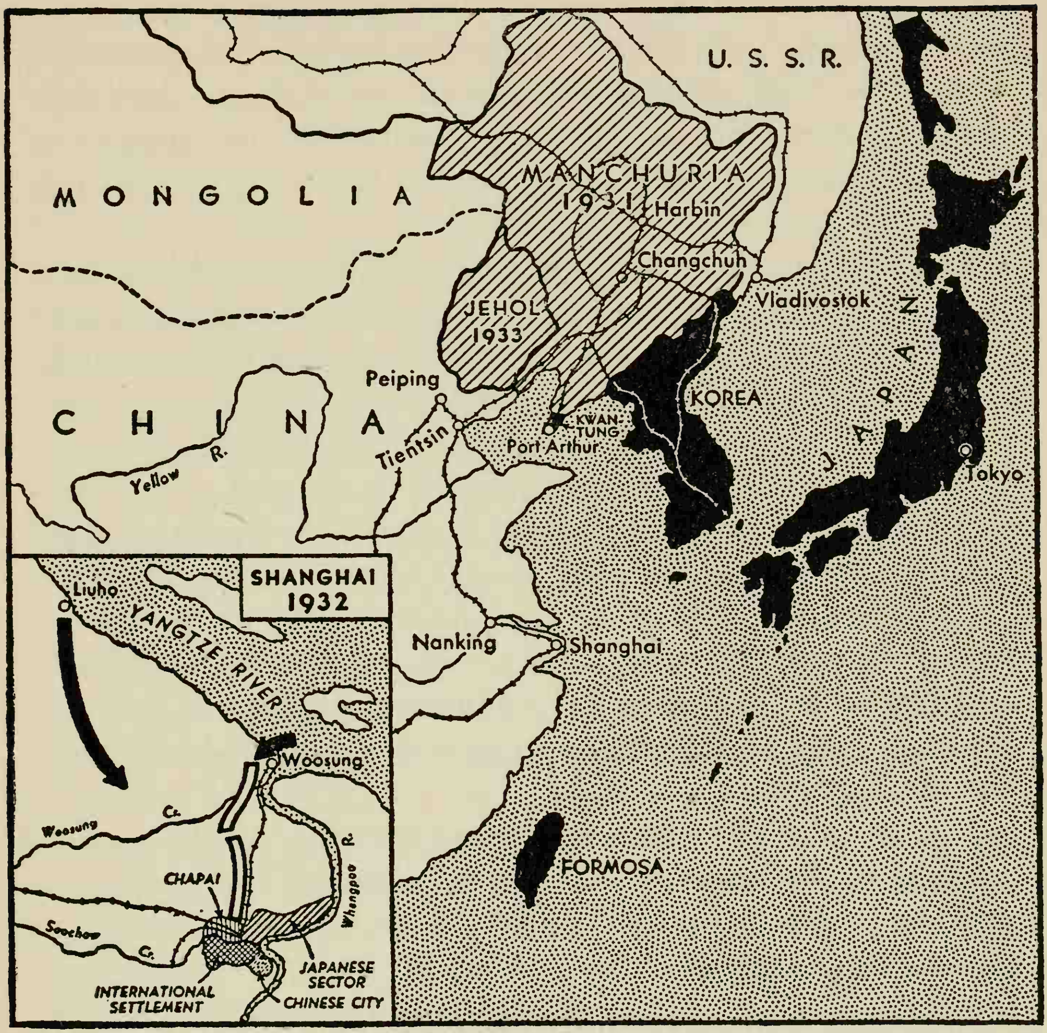
That appearance was not to the interest of Japan's ruling class. Their plans and ambitions have always been clear. In 1927 the retiring Premier of Japan, Baron Giichi Tanaka, prepared for his emperor the document which is now known as the "Tanaka Memorial." Although it has never been completely authenticated, the moves of Japan since that date have been so consistent with it that it may well be taken as Japan's plan for world conquest.

Japan's plan was first to take Manchuria. This move would give her some of the raw materials which she so badly needed and would furnish the military bases from which she could make her next move. The second stage was to absorb China, step by step if possible, so as not to arouse the rest of the world. China would give her markets for her manufactured goods and, she hoped, more man power for her army. The third stage was to attack Russia and to sweep the islands of the South Pacific and the southern territories of Asia, including even India. These acquisitions would round out her empire and finally give her all the raw materials she needed for self-sufficiency. The final step in the plan was to be a successful war with the United States which would give Japan control of the Pacific Ocean.

By 1932, Japan's relations with China were beginning to reach a critical stage over the Manchurian question. Through treaties and agreements with various Chinese governments, Japan had gained important political and economic rights. In particular, she held the Kuantung Leased Territory (thirteen hundred square miles) under full sovereignty, maintaining a large military establishment there. The principal railways and mining enterprises of southern Manchuria were also in Japanese hands, and Japan had the right to administer the railway areas and to maintain large numbers of armed railway police. In 1930, Japan's property interests in Manchuria were valued at about a billion American dollars. Even her liberal leaders were determined to maintain those interests as vital to Japan's security.

The Chinese government naturally regarded Japan's position as immoral and illegal, even though its administrative control over Manchuria was weak. The Chinese had to admit Japan's economic interests, but they vigorously opposed Japan's claims to a special political position. This situation could not be continued without many complications. Japan's militarists chose the inevitable disputes as provocation for war.

On September 18th, 1931, without further reference to the government, Japanese railway troops of the Kuantung army seized Mukden, the Manchurian capital, and the occupation of Manchuria was begun. Manchuria had a standing army of about a quarter million men, distributed in garrisons at widely separated points. Its officers seem to have had no plans prepared to meet the event of possible hostilities with the Japanese. This was undoubtedly known to the enemy, for the commander in chief of the Japanese forces throughout Manchuria was also chief military adviser to the Manchurian government. Japan's control over the railways from Korea and from the Kuantung Leased Territory to Mukden permitted them to concentrate large forces where


U. S. S. R.
MONGOLIA
MANCHURIA 1931
Harbin
Changchuh
Vladivostok
JEHOL 1933
Peiping
CHINA
Tientsin
KWAN-TUNG
Port Arthur
KOREA
JAPAN
Tokyo
Yellow R.
Nanking
Shanghai
FORMOSA
SHANGHAI 1932
Liuho
YANGTZE RIVER
Woosung
Woosung Cr.
CHAPAI
Whangpoo R.
Soochow Cr.
INTERNATIONAL SETTLEMENT
JAPANESE SECTOR
CHINESE CITY

33. JAPAN MOVES ON CHINA, 1931–1933

needed and to solve the problems of supply and reinforcement. The Chinese Nationalist government was unable to spare any forces to back up the Manchurian army. As a consequence of these factors Japan was able to overrun Manchuria with considerable speed. Less than five months after the seizure of Mukden, every important Manchurian city was in the hands of the Japanese (*see* Map 33, p. 169).

The speed and efficiency of the Japanese operations in Manchuria testify to the fact that their staff work was of the highest quality and that all plans and preparations had been made long in advance. The quick seizure of control of communications isolated the scattered Chinese garrisons. Under orders from the Manchurian government not to resist, the Chinese withdrew, fighting only when actually fired upon. Considerable bodies of Chinese troops, reaching central and northern Manchuria, adopted the guerrilla warfare tactics which still give trouble to the invader. But these disorganized actions, unsupported by military action elsewhere, had no effect on the outcome.

After taking the capitals of the three Manchurian provinces, the Japanese installed Chinese puppet governors under military control. With Japanese guidance an "independence movement" made its appearance, and on February 18, 1932, the Japanese-controlled Chinese officials published a declaration of independence from China. The new state was called Manchukuo. Henry Pu-Yi, the Chinese boy emperor who had abdicated in 1912, became its first chief executive; he was inaugurated on March 9.

The Chinese government decided that if Manchuria were to be regained, it would have to be through the help of other Powers. Three days after the attack on Mukden, China appealed to the Assembly of the League of Nations, then in session, and to the United States. Her action in this case was based on several promises. In the first place, America always has tried to keep a balance of power in the Far East, so that no one country or group of countries should become strong enough to menace her interests there. The Chinese hoped, therefore, to see the United States take the lead in forcing Japan to give up her gains in Manchuria. In the second place, China's legal position was strong. It was based on treaties and agreements which had as their general aim the preservation of the balance of power through safeguarding China's existence. Chief among these was the Nine Power Treaty of 1922, in which the nine contracting Powers, Japan among them, had agreed "to respect the sovereignty, the independence, and the territorial and administrative integrity of China" and to encourage the growth and development of China. Another was the Pact of Paris of 1928, also signed by Japan, which condemned "recourse to war for the solution of international controversies," and renounced war as an instrument of national policy in relations with other states. Finally, both China and Japan were members of the League of Nations, and as such had agreed to submit any disputes arising between them either to arbitration or to judicial settlement by the League Council. Not even Japan's most ardent apologists could refute the charge that in occupying Manchuria she had acted in direct violation of her treaty obligations. China, with all celerity, called these violations to the attention of the world.

The League communicated with the government of the United States to learn our attitude. Thereafter, the diplomatic moves of the United States were co-ordinated with those of the League. There was a widely held fallacy that "strong" diplomatic action on the part of foreign Powers would embarrass the Japanese Foreign Office in its attempts to control the militarists. The action taken by the Western Powers in 1931 and 1932 was, in effect, confined to expressions of disapproval. This had little influence on the Japanese leaders, who were propagating the idea of their divine mission to spread the benefits of Japanese rule throughout the Far East.

Essentially it was a question of whether or not Japan's action had menaced the vital interests of any of the Powers to such an extent that they were willing to risk a war with Japan in the defense of their interests. In Europe, it was generally felt that, since the United States had virtually assumed the commanding role in the politics of the Pacific at the Washington Conference of 1922, it was up to her to check Japan. There was some merit in this view, for the naval agreements reached at the Conference, for which we were largely responsible, had the effect of making Japan very strong in the western Pacific. The United States made a strong protest against the Japanese seizure of Manchuria, but the remainder of the world Powers were unwilling to support her (*see* Note 14, p. 263).

Japan's military position in 1931 was strong enough so that her leaders could feel free to carry out their plans without fear of interference from other nations. Russia had yet to build a modern army and had only just begun the development of military industries in Siberia. Besides, a Russian challenge to Japan at this time would have found the other Western Powers divided. The Five Power Naval Treaty, another product of the Washington Conference, had guaranteed for Japan the security of her homeland. Her ratio of capital ships with Great Britain and the United States was set at 5:5:3. Furthermore, those two nations agreed to preserve the *status quo* in the western Pacific; the nearest American base was at Hawaii, and the nearest British base at Singapore. Moreover, the treaty restricted only the building of capital ships. By 1932, the Japanese had achieved at least equality with the American Navy in aircraft carriers, heavy and light cruisers, destroyers, and submarines.

It had been the intention of the Japanese to confine hostilities to Manchuria. Their victories in the north had been won cheaply and were not effectively challenged by any other Power. They desired only an opportunity to consolidate this position and exploit their gains. The Chinese government was in no position to attempt a counterstroke. The Manchurian army had been left to its own devices and at no time was it reinforced from below the Great Wall. Indeed, the government did everything possible to deny the Japanese pretexts for military action elsewhere.

The seizure of Manchuria, however, inflamed public sentiment throughout China. In the Shanghai area there was anti-Japanese feeling which the Chinese authorities would not or could not control. When this took the form of an anti-Japanese trade boycott, cutting down Japanese imports to one sixth of their normal value in two months, Japan sent warships to Shanghai to put pressure on the local Chinese authorities. Violent incidents occurred, perpetrated by both parties. On January 28, 1932, the Chinese agreed to Japan's demands that the Chinese garrison of Shanghai be withdrawn. Before the order could be carried out, a Japanese naval landing party attacked Chinese patrols, and fighting became general. The second phase of the Manchurian incident was begun.

Responsibility for the outbreak of hostilities at Shanghai belongs to the Japanese naval command. In the invasion of Manchuria the navy had served its purpose by being rather than by doing, and the glory of Japan's successes had gone to the army. It was undoubtedly the hope of securing credit for having forced the retirement of the Chinese Shanghai garrison that caused Admiral Shiozawa to send his marines to hasten their going. But the Chinese forces in the Shanghai area were of different mettle from that of the Manchurian army, and they vigorously resisted the initial assault. The Japanese naval command was forced to call on the Army for support. Before a decision was reached, seventy thousand Japanese troops had been employed.

The Chinese government had tried desperately to prevent the Shanghai incident and then to minimize it. But the Shanghai region was garrisoned by the Cantonese 19th Route Army, under the command of General Tsai Tin-kai, and its officers were unfriendly to the Chiang Kai-shek regime. They refused to heed orders to withdraw without resisting. As hostilities developed, the Nationalist government declined to supply or reinforce General Tsai until it was forced to do so by public opinion; the greater part of Tsai's assistance came from patriotic Chinese in Shanghai and overseas. The fear that foreign Powers might intervene on China's behalf limited the scope of Japan's military effort. Foreign interests were enormous both in Shanghai and in the Yangtze Valley, for which Shanghai was the main port; it was likely that these would be defended if menaced by Japan. Foreign intervention would have imperiled the success of the Manchurian invasion, a risk that the Japanese were not prepared to run.

The character of the Battle of Shanghai was determined by the limited objectives of the Japanese, and by the terrain on which it was fought. The task which the Japanese set themselves was simply to clear Shanghai and its vicinity of Chinese troops. No effort was made to destroy China's armies or break the Chinese will to resist by conducting military operations elsewhere. Still occupied in Manchuria, the Japanese had no forces to spare for an extended campaign in China.

The terrain on which the hostilities took place favored the defenders. The city of Shanghai is situated on the Whangpoo River, fourteen miles from its confluence with the Yangtze. In the heart of the city, on the left bank of the river, were the French Concession and the International Settlement, both of them under foreign jurisdiction. They were surrounded by the Chinese municipality of Greater Shanghai, which extended north to Woosung, a fortified point at the mouth of the Whangpoo. The Concession and the Settlement were guarded by foreign troops, which took up defensive positions on the boundaries of these areas. Japan, as one of the foreign Powers with interests in Shanghai, was allotted one of the defense positions on the northern boundary of the Settlement (*see* Map 33, p.169).

When the foreign consuls declared a state of emergency on January 28, Japanese marines occupied their position. This arrangement gave them the advantage of a shore base in the International Settlement, which the Chinese dared not attack; but it hampered their freedom of action, for the Settlement boundaries were irregular and the left flank of the Chinese rested on the angle where the Japanese and British defense sectors joined. The Japanese marines provoked hostilities by sending their patrols across the boundary onto Chinese soil.

After the initial attack, the Chinese rapidly extended their lines to the Woosung forts. This limited the Japanese to frontal attacks along a twelve-mile front. The Chinese flanks could be turned only by landings on the banks of the Yangtze above Woosung, or by pushing up the Whangpoo past the International Settlement and landing on Chinese soil. These operations appeared costly and might have had the effect of spreading hostilities beyond the Shanghai area; for this the Japanese were unprepared. Until March 1 they confined their efforts to assaulting the Chinese lines.

The Chinese forces were sufficient to hold their position in depth. Although deficient in artillery and in airplanes, they were well supplied with machine guns and mortars. The Chinese defenses had been skillfully constructed, and were well manned. The original Japanese force was limited to three hundred marines and sailors, but these were supported by the guns of their cruisers and destroyers on the Whangpoo as well as by naval aircraft operating from carriers. The Japanese soon brought up reinforcements, and their army took charge of operations. Though the Chinese were forced to give ground, they did so in good order, taking a heavy toll of the enemy infantry.

On March 1, the Japanese command initiated a wide enveloping movement by landing a division on the right bank of the Yangtze. This threat to their left flank compelled the Chinese to abandon the Woosung forts. By

March 3 they had fallen back about fifteen miles to prepared positions. Since this withdrawal complied in effect with the original Japanese demands of January 27, the Japanese command gave the order to stop fighting. Hostilities came to an end. On May 5, after long negotiations, a complete armistice agreement was signed, in which the Chinese agreed to the temporary demilitarization of the Shanghai area.

The Battle of Shanghai was over. The Chinese had suffered twenty-four thousand casualties, and their total material loss in property destroyed or looted was estimated at a billion and a half Chinese dollars. But the stout resistance of the 19th Route Army raised Chinese morale and in part offset the failure of China's armies in Manchuria.

Early in 1933, Manchukuo was rounded out by the conquest of Jehol Province, a part of Inner Mongolia north of the Great Wall and southwest of Manchuria proper. In a drive lasting but two weeks the Japanese overran the province, taking Jehol City, its capital, on March 4, 1933. With the inclusion of Jehol, Manchukuo covered an area of 513,143 square miles with a population of nearly 37 millions. (The South, east of the Mississippi and below the Ohio and Mason-Dixon line, covers 461,953 square miles.) With its great natural resources, including 80 million acres of farm land, extensive deposits of iron ore and coal, and its industries, railways, and banks confiscated from the Chinese, Manchuria was a rich prize. Its acquisition provided Japan with the economic resources which would permit her to embark on the conquest of China.

Superficially, the administration of Manchukuo was Chinese, or rather, "Manchurian"; actually, the Japanese exercised complete control. The country remained under military occupation, and Japanese officials in seemingly subordinate roles dominated provincial and local administrations. These were primarily responsible to the Japanese ambassador, who was concurrently commander in chief of the Kuantung army. On March 1, 1934, Manchukuo became a monarchy, with Pu-Yi, renamed Kang Teh, as emperor.

Japan worked at top speed to develop Manchukuo's resources. Now she had a land base from which to operate against both China and Russia. She flanked the Maritime Provinces and the great Russian naval base at Vladivostock. That base was, and is, a constant threat to the heart of island Japan, six hundred miles away. There both planes and submarines were, and presumably still are, poised for attack. Japan's militarists are still wondering whether they should not have taken on Russia before China.

At the same time, German influence began to make itself felt among the rulers of Japan. That influence increased steadily, although the middle and lower classes of Japan distrusted it. Its results were progressive, leading to withdrawal of German military advisers from China, to perfection of the Japanese war machine, to development of imitation Nazi technique of conquest, and finally to the full alliance with the Axis.

The four years from 1933 to 1937 were the "peaceful" years, the years of Japan's effort to attain her ends in China by a policy of bully and bluff. The world situation was favorable. America appeared interested chiefly in her own internal affairs. Her lack of interest in the Pacific was indicated by the passage in 1934 of the act which would leave the Philippines independent in 1945.

In 1935, the Neutrality Act was passed in an attempt to avoid further entanglement in any war outside the Western Hemisphere.

The failure of the nations of the world to back the League of Nations in the Manchurian affair indicated that perhaps the League was nothing but a pious hope and that there were no teeth in its pronouncements. When Italy's seizure of Abyssinia passed without any effective action from the Powers who talked international morality, the Japanese had reason to believe that a program of international loot and aggression would find the great Powers of the world writing diplomatic notes and doing nothing else about it.

The Japanese militarists increased their pressure on China step by step. It was announced, as an alleged counterpart to the Monroe Doctrine, that Japan alone was responsible for the maintenance of peace in the Far East. Foreign business ventures were forced out of Manchuria. Japan spoke of a policy of "Asia for the Asiatics," which meant "Asia for the Japanese." China was subjected to a "softening" program. There were continual minor incidents. Under terms of their truce with China in 1933, the Japanese compelled the removal of her armed forces from the northern mountain passes. Gradually the Japanese garrisons at Peiping and Tientsin and various other points were increased. In 1935, the Japanese militarists attempted a coup d'état by suddenly announcing that an independent state in China had been set up. Their home government, however, refused to back them up. Nevertheless, they did achieve some slight success in that troops of the Chinese central government were moved south of the Yellow River.

It was customary for Japanese troops to go on maneuvers which were frankly invasions of Chinese territory. Chinese officials and officers were bribed to promote disturbances. The Japanese organized a wholesale smuggling scheme which not only enriched Japanese merchants, thus binding them to the policies of the militarists, but also cut down the revenues of the Chinese government, thus weakening China's power to resist. The Japanese army went into the narcotic business; opium was produced and peddled in an effort to destroy the heart and soul of the Chinese people at a neat profit to the Japanese.

China's great nationalist leader, Chiang Kai-shek, faced the enormous task of welding the Chinese people into a nation in arms. His chief problem was the quarrel between the Chinese government and the Chinese Communists. In 1934 he launched his fifth and final campaign, throwing an army of nine hundred thousand men against the Communist army of one hundred and eighty thousand in the mountainous districts of southeast China.

In October, the Communist leaders broke through the Nationalist ring of troops and, with ninety thousand men, began their "long march," one of the most remarkable feats in military history. They marched three thousand miles and they fought fifteen major battles; their losses were terrific but were partly balanced by recruiting en route. The march brought them to Shensi in northwestern China where, in 1936, they mustered an army of one hundred thousand.

Chiang Kai-shek continued the campaign but the government forces fought only half-heartedly. In December, 1936, he flew to inspect his troops. On landing he found himself in the odd position of being the prisoner of his own commander and forced to negotiate with the enemy. Out of these negotiations, and built on the common hatred for the Japanese shared by the Chinese Nationalists and Communists, there grew a much improved understanding. The foundation for a national front against Japan was formed. The Communist forces were incorporated into the national military organization as the 8th Route Army. One of Japan's greatest fears was becoming a reality. The Chinese were settling their internal differences, and Japan was about to face a united China possessing a will to resist the aggressions of Japan.

Japan had been reorganizing her army, placing every emphasis on mechanization and increased fire power. This change-over would have been completed in 1938. By 1937 she had a standing army of about three hundred thousand carefully picked and highly trained soldiers and a reserve of two million well-trained men. A Manchukuan army of some one hundred fifty thousand native troops officered by Japanese was also available. The fanatical patriotism and loyalty of the Japanese troops and their complete faith in their invincibility was a tremendous source of Japanese strength. The war of nerves had failed in China; the relatively bloodless conquests seemed to be over. Russia was quiescent, but China was building both a war machine and a unified nation. According to the Japanese estimate of the situation, it was time to strike before China could further improve her resistance.

The Japanese estimate of the situation was correct with respect to the Chinese army. The Chinese troops numbered about two million, but not more than one hundred thousand of these were well equipped for modern warfare. It is probable that there were less than one thousand pieces of artillery in the whole of China.

But the Japanese estimate failed to take account of several sources of strength which were to come to the aid of the Chinese. They underestimated the unity which they themselves had given to China in the rapidly developing hatred of everything Japanese. They took no cognizance of the four hundred million Chinese who could absorb millions in losses and still carry on the fight. They never thought that the Chinese people would choose to fight rather than to give up to the invader, for the Chinese had given up to invader after invader in history. Finally, the Japanese never counted on having to fight China's greatest weapon, the land of China itself, with its huge distances and poor communications.

Japan chose the incident of the Marco Polo Bridge on July 7, 1937, to provoke her move into China. She chose a trivial frontier clash to take her next step toward world empire. The policy of Japan, the technique of Japan, and the operations of Japan have been repeated over and over until many millions are today engaged in a death struggle over a quarter of the earth's surface.

CHAPTER XI

THE BATTLE OF CHINA

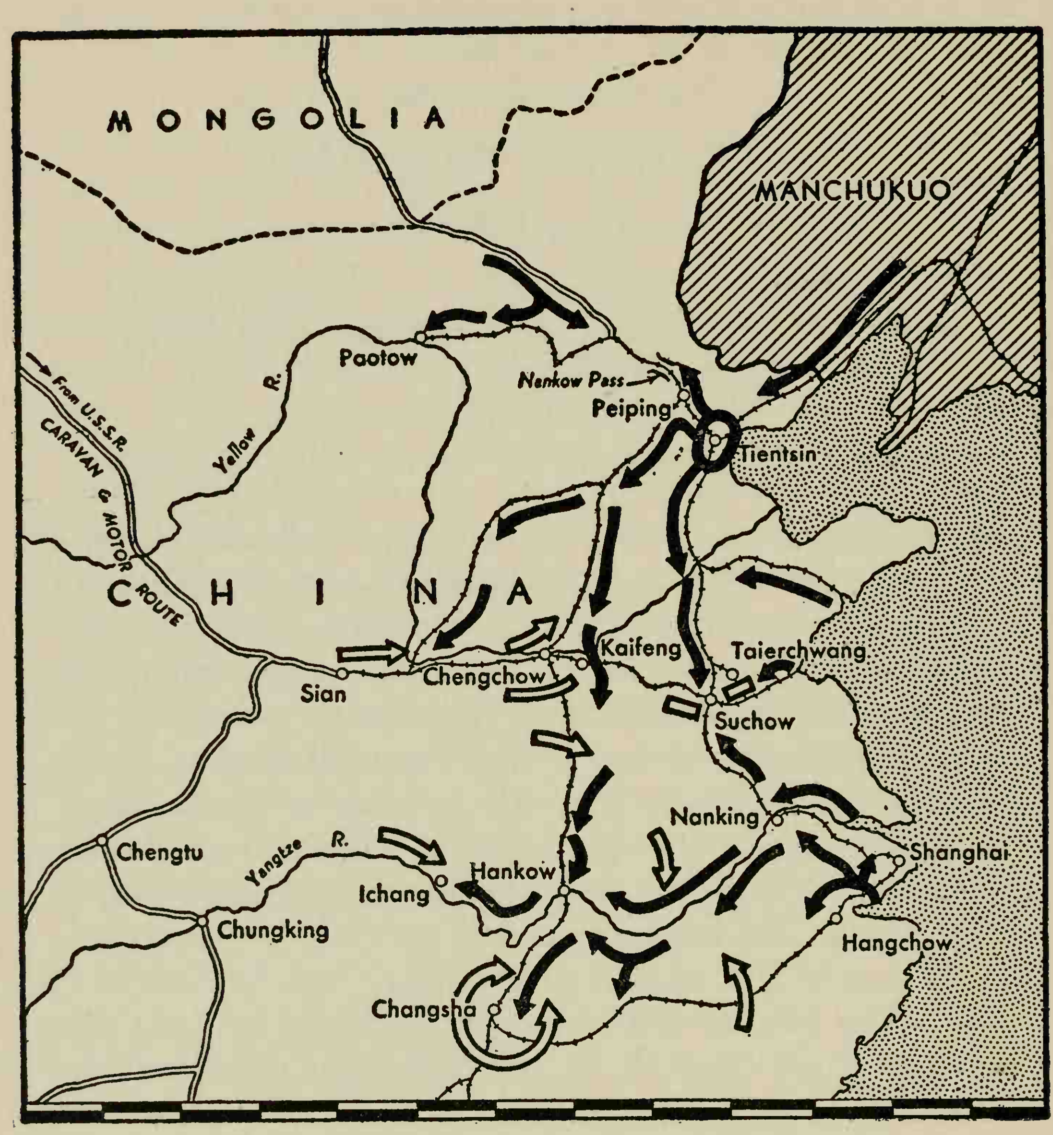
July 7, 1937—

> Having China's entire resources at our disposal we shall proceed to conquer India, the Archipelago, Asia Minor, Central Asia, and even Europe.
>
> BARON GIICHI TANAKA
> *Memorial for the Emperor,* July 25, 1927

HER CONTINENTAL BASE had been won and its resources had been exploited for four years. Her army had been thoroughly modernized. Her domestic economy was geared to an all-out war effort. Japan was all but ready to ride down her highway of conquest. Leading her on was that will-o'-the-wisp of the conquerors of all time, complete mastery over all of the peoples of the earth.

On the night of July 7, 1937, the Chinese guards on the Marco Polo Bridge near Peiping clashed with Japanese troops. The Japanese called the clash a "local incident," and that designation obtained until December 7, 1941. The locality shifted over to the south, but the death struggle between the Japanese aggressor and the Chinese defender remained officially a "local incident" in the eyes of the State Departments and Foreign Offices of the other world Powers.

At the beginning perhaps the Japanese really intended to keep this a local incident and, for the time being, to be content with the creation of a new puppet state


MONGOLIA
MANCHUKUO
Paotow
Yellow R.
From U.S.S.R.
CARAVAN & MOTOR ROUTE
Nankow Pass
Peiping
Tientsin
CHINA
Kaifeng
Taierchwang
Chengchow
Sian
Suchow
Nanking
Shanghai
Chengtu
Yangtze R.
Hankow
Ichang
Chungking
Hangchow
Changsha

34. CAMPAIGNS IN CHINA, 1937–1938

to protect their left flank if they decided to move against Russia. Almost immediately they concentrated some two hundred thousand troops in the area and rapidly drove the Chinese defenders southward. By August 1, they had captured Peiping and Tientsin and set up their puppet state (*see* Map 34, p. 184). In less than a month they had gained control of rich coal and ore deposits, access to valuable cotton-growing districts, and domination over a population of eighty million Chinese.

But the Japanese naval command had to have its operations in order to keep up its prestige at home. Within six weeks the ports of China were blockaded in an effort to make China capitulate quickly and completely. Then Japan was committed to something more than a "local incident," with or without the agreement of her government.

Japanese bombers immediately ranged far and wide, concentrating their heaviest attacks on industrial and commercial centers, all open cities. These attacks had a double purpose, to destroy the production lines and to break the Chinese will to resist. These attacks were good tactics, for they were designed to cut off supplies and curtail industrial production. But they were also attacks on noncombatants.

Today we recognize the fact that in modern war the word "noncombatant," as defined by the Rules of Land Warfare and International Law, with all the immunities from the action of armed forces contemplated by such rules, is a dead letter. The Japanese must be given the questionable credit for reviving a concept of war which had vanished with Tamerlane and Genghis Khan. The only noncombatants are the dead.

Operations of the Japanese land forces in the autumn of 1937 fall roughly into two campaigns, in north China and in the Yangtze region. The north China operations followed a fairly uniform pattern aimed at the seizure of principal cities and of the connecting lines of railroads, major highways, rivers, and canals. By October 17, 1937, Paoting and Suiyuan had been taken by a combined force of Japanese and Mongols, the latter under Prince Teh. The promise of "independent Mongolkuo" was the bait used to bring the Mongols into the Japanese ranks. That puppet state, declared in existence on November 1, seems to have been lost in the shuffle of succeeding events. Strong Japanese forces broke the Chinese resistance at Nankow Pass, a gateway for a possible attack on Siberia. By the end of December, 1937, the Japanese held the rail lines and key points over the greater part of China north of the Yellow River.

Throughout this campaign the Japanese pursued fairly uniform tactics, pinning down the Chinese defenders with a frontal attack and forcing them out of position by means of a limited flanking movement. Generally, the Chinese were able to withdraw without unduly heavy losses. In many instances they fought with courage and determination, even when overwhelmed by the tremendous superiority of the Japanese in artillery, aircraft, and tanks. Not infrequently, Japanese frontal attacks were shattered and thrown back.

The Shanghai operations show a departure from the normal Chinese strategy of check and withdrawal. National pride had apparently dictated a fight to the finish. General Chiang Kai-shek, Chinese Nationalist commander in chief, unwisely crowded nearly a half million troops into the relatively small area around the city. Initial Japanese efforts scored only small successes.

Heavily reinforced, the Japanese finally took Shanghai on November 13, 1937, after more than three months of very bloody fighting. Practically every Japanese success was achieved by resort to the flanking maneuver; the Chinese were slow to provide adequate protection against it. Successive defense lines west of Shanghai were likewise outflanked. Finally, a surprise landing by the Japanese in Hongchow Bay compelled a disorganized retreat. Terrific aerial bombing and close pursuit all but turned the retreat into a rout.

The Chinese were in no condition to set up a proper defense of their capital, Nanking. It was evacuated November 12, 1937, all government activities being transferred to Hankow and Chungking. The capture of Nanking on December 12, 1937, was followed by six days of unrestrained Japanese sack and horror unsurpassed in all history. To this day even Japan's phrasemakers have been unable to advance any excuse beyond "the troops got out of hand."

Appraising the situation at the year's end, the Japanese high command had its first real intimation of the errors in its initial estimate. The cost of the campaign in men, munitions, and supplies had far exceeded what they had believed necessary to accomplish China's conquest. However huge the area which had been taken (greater in extent than all Germany), Japanese control actually extended no further from the lines of communication than the glitter of a bayonet. All the vast areas between the railway lines were completely under Chinese control, enabling them to supply the Chinese armies, wipe out Japanese detachments, blow up bridges. Guerrilla warfare was responsible for a steady stream of the little urns in which the ashes of the Japanese soldiers were carried back to the homeland. The Japanese found themselves in a battle to the death with China's men, women, and children, a battle in which no quarter was asked or given.

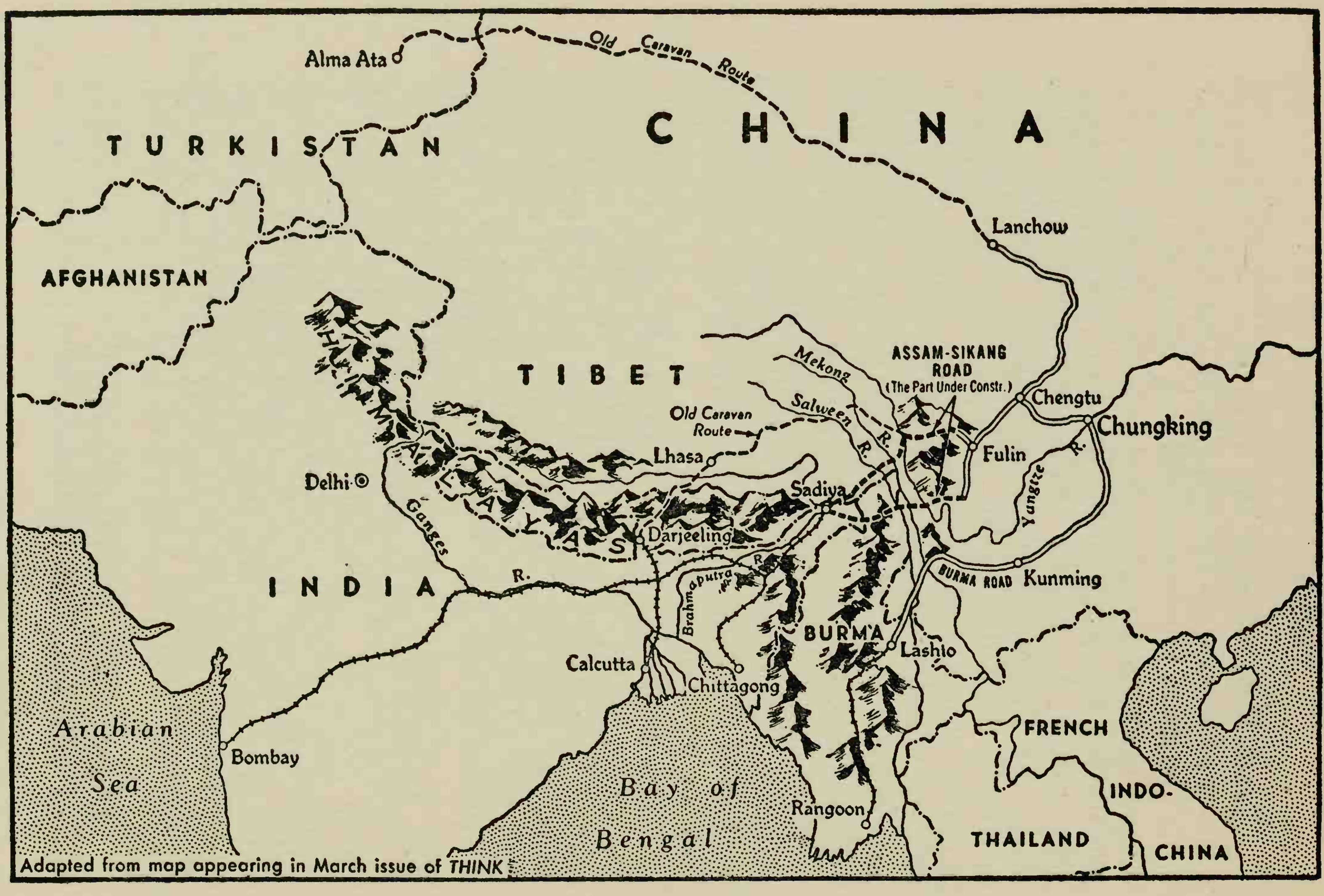
Japan thought the occasion ripe for a peace offer. It was promptly and vigorously rejected by Chiang, who knew that the nation's morale, at its lowest point after the retreat to Nanking, had risen once more to combat level. No choice was left the Japanese except to resume operations. One phase of the 1938 efforts was aimed at elimination of the guerrillas. The other sought to establish an effective junction between the armies operating in north China and the Shanghai group. Japanese execution was effective on the whole. However, the battle of Taierchwang in April stands as a great Japanese disaster, the greatest suffered by Japanese troops in modern times. An army of sixty thousand Japanese was all but annihilated by the Chinese who had surrounded it. Among their loot the Chinese counted some seventy field pieces, forty tanks, seventy armored cars, and huge quantities of machine guns, rifles, and ammunition. The myth of Japanese invincibility died, so far as China was concerned, at Taierchwang.

Heavy reinforcements with ample supplies were promptly rushed from Japan to enable a resumption of the offensive. Suchow was taken May 20, 1938, but the real prize, the Chinese defending army, had slipped out of the trap. Early in the following month, a drive was launched to seize Chengchow. At the last moment, the Chinese cut the great dikes of the Yellow River, swollen by heavy rain. Japanese losses were heavy, particularly in trucks, tanks, and artillery, submerged in the flood. Ten months later, Chengchow was still in Chinese hands.

Japan then turned to the Yangtze Valley and scored a series of successes. The immediate objective was Nankow. The main Japanese attack was delivered by two columns advancing along both banks of the Yangtze, accompanied by a strong naval flotilla. As a diversion, a Japanese column by-passed Chengchow and drove south along the Peiping-Hankow railway. It was, however, held up by the Chinese in the hilly country. Massed aerial bombing softened the final resistance of the city's defenders, who finally evacuated October 25 and withdrew once more to the west. The Chinese government and the bulk of the Chinese army made good their escape. The surprise capture of Canton on October 13, 1938, by a Japanese expeditionary force played a material part in the loss of Hankow, which had depended on the Canton area for much of its supplies.

The bloody fighting of 1938 had brought Japan little, if any, nearer her ultimate goal than she had been a year earlier. Much territory had been occupied and heavy losses had been inflicted on the Chinese. Nevertheless, their will to resist, far from being broken, was apparently growing stronger. Cut off from their major outside sources of supply, they were nevertheless getting small amounts from Soviet Russia by road and caravan. A new supply line, the Burma Road, was being opened up. Japan, in the meanwhile, was feeling the pinch of war acutely. Whatever the enthusiasm roused by the victories of 1937, the steady drain of casualties and the rapidly growing difficulties of ordinary living were making the average Japanese heartily sick of the "China incident."

During 1939, the Chinese-Japanese war became a war of attrition. The Japanese hope of victory lay in


Alma Ata
Old Caravan Route
TURKISTAN
CHINA
Lanchow
AFGHANISTAN
TIBET
Mekong
ASSAM-SIKANG ROAD (The Part Under Constr.)
Chengtu
Chungking
Old Caravan Route
Salween R.
R.
Fulin
Lhasa
Delhi
Yangtze R.
Sadiya
Ganges
HIMALAYAS
Darjeeling
BURMA ROAD
Kunming
INDIA
R.
R.
Brahmaputra
BURMA
Lashio
Calcutta
Chittagong
FRENCH
Arabian Sea
Bombay
Bay of Bengal
INDO-
Rangoon
THAILAND
CHINA

Adapted from map appearing in March issue of *THINK*

35. CHINA'S SUPPLY LINES

the annihilation of the Chinese army and in breaking the will of the Chinese people to resist. The guerrilla warfare of the Chinese increased rather than diminished. The Japanese were fighting more than the armies of Chiang Kai-shek. They were fighting the Chinese people. The land of China continued to defeat the Japanese army. The great distances, the lack of communication, the rivers, the floods, the mountains, and the marshes—all were enemies which Japanese military power could not overcome. Meanwhile, the Chinese were building an industrial war effort in the interior around Chungking, their new capital.

The Chinese were receiving more than moral support from America and Britain. Over the Burma Road came the minimum of war materials necessary to their continued effort, and Japanese bombing was unable to break this supply line. Through Indo-China came more supplies; even more supplies came from Russia (*see* Map 35, p. 190). Popular polls in the United States showed enormous sympathy with China but a reluctance to become involved too deeply in East Asia. Our State Department carefully preserved the Japanese idea that this war in which millions of men had already died was a "local incident." Had we recognized a state of war between Japan and China, the provisions of our Neutrality Act would immediately come into effect and the few vital supplies we were sending to China would be completely cut off. Japan did not declare formal war on China, and thus force the United States to call our Neutrality Act into effect, because she was herself obtaining from us the aviation gasoline, the scrap iron, and the strategic materials not only to fight the Chinese, but also to prepare for her war with the United States. The

United States was furnishing the sinews of war for two great nations fighting each other.

At home, too, Japan had her troubles. The political situation was never secure, as shown by the fact that from June 3, 1938, to November 3, 1941, Japan had no less than seven ministries. Each Japanese cabinet change signalized the fact that, temporarily, the radicals, the conservatives or the moderates (middle of the road) held the legislative and administrative balance. However, with each change the pendulum swung further towards the militarists on the return.

These political changes arose from Japan's difficulty in meeting the drains of war and at the same time providing for her people, food, clothing, and shelter. Japan is not a rich nation. War and military expansion, since the fall of 1931, has become a terrific load for the Japanese taxpayer. In 1938, Japan attempted to meet the problem of organizing every detail of the nation's economic life. The National Mobilization Act of that year fixed regulations covering the production and distribution of all goods. Certain of its provisions were not put into effect at once, but by September 1, 1939, the individual Japanese had ceased to function as such. He was merely a cog in the state machine.

Having mired down in the interior of China, the Japanese turned in 1939 to that part of their plan which called for sweeping the Pacific Islands. They occupied the large island of Hainan off the coast of French Indo-China in February and the Spratly Islands, strategically located in the South China Sea halfway between Borneo and Indo-China, in March. Their excuse was the necessity of cutting the Chinese supply lines. These movements also gave them bases from which to jump off against southeastern Asia and the islands off the coast.

The outbreak of the great war in Europe on September 1, 1939, changed the picture completely. Russia had her problems in Europe and might reasonably be expected to avoid hostilities in the East which might end in a war on two fronts. The British Navy was committed in the Atlantic and Mediterranean, and Britain, it was believed, would not resist aggressions south of China, provided that her own possessions were not invaded. The American people were interested in their internal affairs, and the war in Europe was distracting their attention from the Far East. Japan had some reason to hope that her moves toward the sources of the tin and rubber supplies of America in the Far East might be accomplished without bringing the guns of the United States Navy across her path.

Japan determined to wind up her war in China. In spite of all the punishment taken at China's hands, she felt confident of settling this matter in a relatively short time. Then she expected to take advantage of the difficulties of the Western Powers and nibble away at their colonies, hoping to induce the withdrawal of support by the home governments. Above all, she aimed at the Dutch East Indies, the richest colonial empire ever owned by any Power. Once Japan had gained a monopoly on the raw materials of the Indies, the world would have to come to her and pay her price.

But the war in China would not be ended. Two drives to take Changsha failed, with large Japanese losses. Japan scored one success when she landed troops on the southern coast of Kwantung Province in November. That drive was aimed at the Chinese supply line over the railroad from Indo-China to Yunnan. Throughout 1940 the war in China was of secondary importance to the southward move; Japan's military campaigns were conducted with the utmost of economy of both men and material, and she by-passed China in the hope of gaining the larger objective.

It was logical that the opening gun of the 1940 campaign was one of diplomacy rather than of ordnance. The Japanese puppet at Nanking, Wang Ching-wei, urged Chiang Kai-shek to join him in making peace with Japan on the basis of no annexation and no indemnities. Chiang declined the offer, and Tokio replied by formally inaugurating the Nanking government on March 30. The treaty between Nanking and Tokio was signed on November 29; its terms revealed that occupied China had fallen into the same pit which had swallowed Manchuria.

Meanwhile Japan continued her drive southward toward the realization of her "Greater Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere." February, 1940, brought a new bombing attack on the Indo-China railroad, well within the frontier. In reply to the protests of the United States and France, Japan declared that military supplies were being carried to Chungking. After the fall of France in June, the Vichy government had no choice but to permit Japanese inspectors to be stationed in northern Indo-China in order to check the supplies which were being forwarded to China. After that the railroad had no real value to Chungking.

In north China, Shanghai, and elsewhere, both French and British communities began to suffer acutely from Japanese pressure. At Tientsin a Japanese blockade cut off the flow of goods from and into the British and French Concessions for weeks. The Japanese went so far as to insult, beat, and even to strip nationals of these countries, without regard to sex. In July, 1940, Britain withdrew her troops from north China and Shanghai. She also closed the Burma Road for a period of three months, on the understanding that the period would be used by Japan to negotiate a reasonable peace with China. That step closed every channel for supplies to China except the long route through Siberia. It marked the low point in China's resistance.

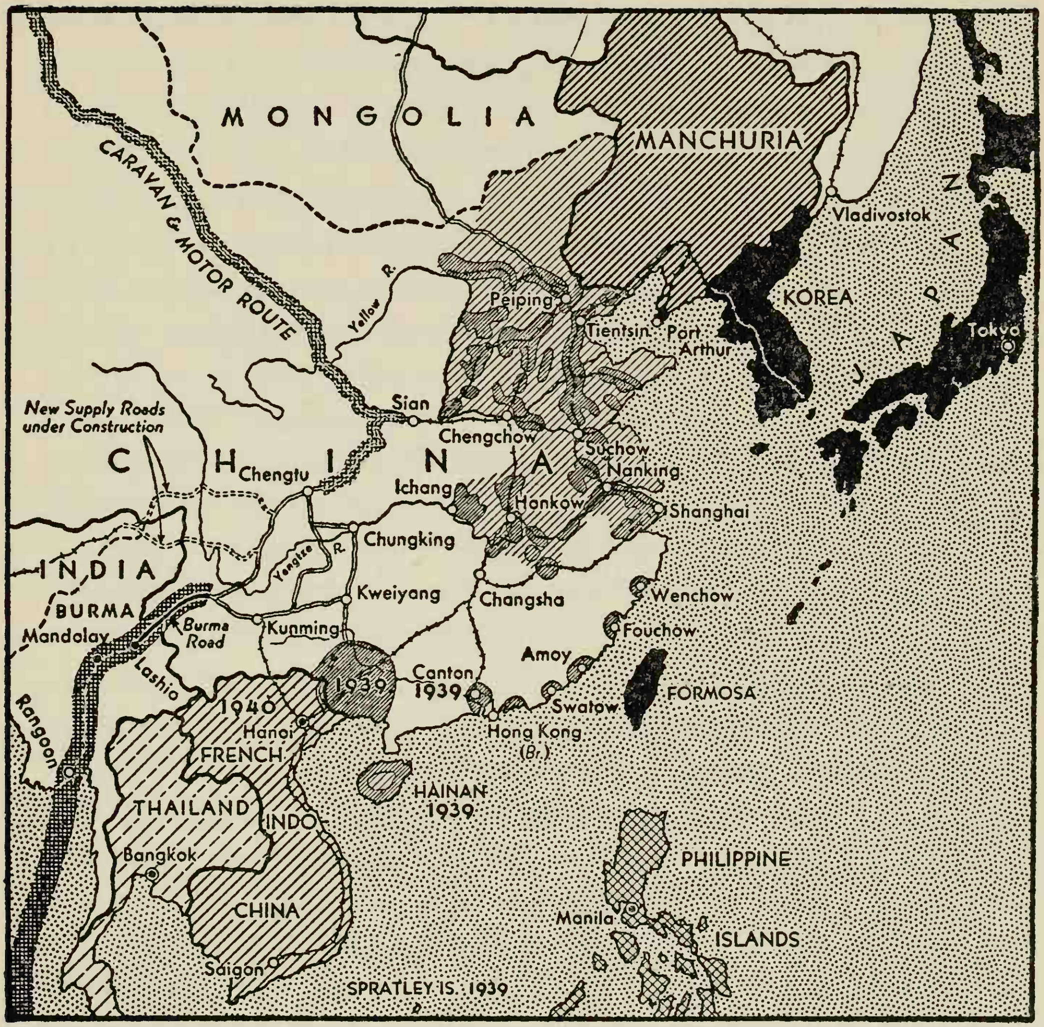
Japan made steady progress in Indo-China. Before the close of the year 1940 her occupation of the northern part of that colony was all but complete. Bases were set up, flying fields were developed, and all preparations were made for further advance southward. The process was made easier by the signing of a treaty June 12, 1940, between Japan and Thailand, in which the signatories professed mutual respect for each other's integrity, and Thailand pledged herself not to assist any power attacking the Japanese. Only one important reverse was suffered by Japan, when Great Britain reopened the Burma Road on October 17.

Behind this stiffening in the British attitude lay Britain's realization that appeasement of Japan was the sure road to elimination of the British influence in the Far East. Equally important was Britain's discovery that the United States was getting ready to block Japanese aggression. We had put Japanese trade on a day-to-day basis. American resistance had come to have real meaning, as the strength of our armed forces began to increase. The American Congress in June had passed a forty billion dollar appropriation bill providing for a two-ocean navy. An increase in the Regular Army, raising its strength from 280,000 to 400,000 had also been authorized.

Estimating the situation correctly, Japan concentrated on getting set for the final all-out war which could end only in complete victory or national suicide. Her last reserves of cash were mobilized to buy every scrap of war material which she could pick up. Once more she recognized her government, bringing Prince Konoye to the premiership in July, 1940, in a move that wiped out the last vestige of democratic processes by abolishing political parties. In September she became a full-fledged ally of Italy and Germany by a treaty which pledged each to assist the others in case another Power entered the war. That other power was the United States. She tried again to cut her losses in China, on the excuse that her stranglehold on Indo-China eliminated the need of a garrison in Nanning.

Japan opened 1941 with a stepping-up in the speed and force of her "blackmail or war" policy. She encouraged Thailand to invade helpless Indo-China; then she intervened to re-establish peace, appointing herself referee in the settlement. The treaty dictated by Japan and signed in May brought Thailand two sizable slices of Indo-Chinese territory in part payment for Thailand's later surrender to Japan's armies in December. Indo-China became a Japanese colony in all but name, a fact attested by her sudden seizure of Saigon, a southerly port only seven hundred miles distant from Singapore. Japan's program of "coast-creeping" was producing results which her armies had not been able to achieve in three years of bloody war in China (*see* Map 36, p. 197).

The campaigns in China proper followed the general pattern of the previous year. Japan staged no large-


MONGOLIA
MANCHURIA
CARAVAN & MOTOR ROUTE
Yellow R.
Vladivostok
KOREA
JAPAN
Tokyo
Peiping
Tientsin
Port Arthur
Sian
New Supply Roads under Construction
CHINA
Chengtu
Chengchow
Suchow
Nanking
Ichang
Hankow
Shanghai
Chungking
Yangtze R.
INDIA
BURMA
Mandalay
Burma Road
Kunming
Kweiyang
Changsha
Wenchow
Fouchow
Lashio
1939
Canton 1939
Amoy
FORMOSA
Swatow
Hong Kong (Br.)
Rangoon
1940
Hanoi
FRENCH
INDO
CHINA
THAILAND
Bangkok
HAINAN 1939
PHILIPPINE ISLANDS
Manila
Saigon
SPRATLEY IS. 1939

36. JAPAN IN EAST ASIA, 1941

scale offensives comparable to those of 1937 and 1938. The offensives of 1941 instead took the form of raids, looking always for the soft spot in China's defenses which might be exploited to the full. One of the more important was the spring offensive in Shansi, intended to push a wedge between the Chinese Communists and Chiang's Nationalists. As so often before, Japan attempted to soften resistance in advance by the generous use of the "silver bullets" of bribery. China handled this and the other spring drives with her normal technique, withdrawing before heavy attack and closing in on the flanks to compel ultimate Japanese retreat.

Three more offensives were launched in the fall, one in north China to mop up Chinese guerrillas, the second in southern Kwangtung, and the third in Hunan, with Changsha once again the objective. A Japanese army of one hundred thousand took and held the city for a few days, only to withdraw when the Chinese in turn took the offensive in an effort to take Ichang, Japan's most advanced outpost on the Yangtze. An incident of note was the revolt of some thirty thousand Chinese "puppet" (Nanking) troops who killed or captured fifty Japanese inspecting officers and then joined Chiang's Nationalists.

The result of the year's fighting was a prolongation of the military stalemate. Two actions were of particular importance. Trained American Army fliers in considerable numbers, who had transferred to the Reserve Corps, were taking service under Chiang Kai-shek. Equipped with late model pursuit planes, they prepared to protect the Burma Road. American engineering skill and American traffic control technique had doubled and tripled the volume of goods moving to Chungking. Later our engineers took over the task of building a railroad to parallel the vital highway. Together these projects did much to keep China in the war.

In the Dutch East Indies, Japan struck another snag. Having warned the Japanese people in January that they "must prepare for the worst," Tokyo now exerted every possible form of pressure on the Dutch to become "a partner" in the "new order." In February, 1941, the Dutch answered with a blunt refusal. A Japanese economic mission had sought vainly to win for Japan a preferred economic status, nothing more nor less than Japanese control over Dutch East Indies economy. That proposition was turned down on June 17 after twenty months of fruitless negotiations. Meanwhile every element of the Dutch East Indies was being brought into the best possible fighting condition, greatly aided by the shipment of American and British planes, tanks, and munitions.

Southward expansion, as Tokyo realized, would be possible only if her vulnerable right flank should be protected against an attack by Russia. To Berlin and Moscow journeyed Foreign Minister Matsuoka, returning from Moscow with a Non-Aggression Pact, signed April 13, 1941. Unlike the arrangement with the Axis, this pact was purely negative, intended only to prevent hostilities between Russia and Japan. The war which broke out December 7, 1941, failed to disturb the status of the pact.

The successive steps by which the ABCD Powers (America, Britain, China, and the Dutch East Indies) improved their defenses and welded them into a unified whole were disturbing. Japan called them "Encirclement!" with quite as much justification as a street-corner brawler who lets drive at everyone in his vicinity and is met with a co-operative effort to suppress him. Every garrison of the ABCD group was steadily strengthened by a constant inflow of troops, equipment, and war supplies. Staff conferences looked to co-ordination of military effort when and if Japan's attack should be launched.

Japan saw in the United States the most serious obstacle to her desire for world expansion. Our immediate strength in the Far East was not as yet important, but it was rising rapidly, and the rate of rise was increasing. A new command was created in July, 1941, "The United States Forces in the Far East," under Lieutenant General (later General) Douglas MacArthur, in the Philippines; it included all American and Filipino units in the Archipelago. A ring of fortified military, naval, and air bases, extending from Dutch Harbor in the Aleutian Islands, through Hawaii and thence to Panama were rushed toward completion. All our Pacific islets, Midway, Wake, Johnston, Palmyra, Guam, and Samoa, were included.

The enormous industrial capacity of the United States was rapidly geared to a productive capacity which would ultimately spell disaster to Japan's ambitions. In the words of President Roosevelt we were to become the "arsenal of democracy," able to supply not only the needs of the American armed forces, but the needs of the other democracies as well. In the Lease-Lend Bill of March 11, 1941, was an item assuring aid to China and to "all governments in exile."

For Japan, by contrast, all hopes of further supplies from the United States had ceased after an agreement was reached between Vichy France and Tokyo, under which those countries undertook to "co-operate militarily for the defense of Indo-China." The hand of Hitler was only too clear in that deal. The United States countered by freezing Japanese assets in the United States and placing an embargo on all trade with Japan. Soon afterwards Great Britain followed suit. Some months earlier the United States had seen fit to close the Panama Canal to Japanese traffic. It would have been too simple for a glory-bent Japanese fanatic to explode in the locks a cargo of high explosives, closing that vital artery for many months.

The occupation of Indo-China was the handiwork of General Hideki Tojo's ministry which, in July, 1941, had replaced the cabinet of the relatively mild Prince Konoye. The change could only mean war, as we know today. Time was needed to complete the final preparations which were being worked out to the last detail with the help of German military, naval, and air experts. To cover her preparations, Japan embarked on a series of conversations in Washington. Admiral Kichisaburo Nomura had spent several months ostensibly trying to discover a formula for the Far East which would satisfy both the United States and his own country. In November, 1941, he was joined in Washington by Mr. Saburo Kurusu. The fact that neither belonged to the extremist element in Japan gave rise to the hope in America that a peaceful settlement might be reached.

As Mr. Kurusu left Japan on his mission, the Japanese Diet was convened in extraordinary session. The high light was Premier Tojo's declaration warning foreign Powers to refrain from interfering with the successful termination of the China Incident and to stop such measures of hostility as blockades. At the same time, American marines and two gunboats of our Yangtze Patrol were moved from Shanghai to the Philippines. Months earlier, the United States had evacuated from Japan and China all of our nationals who wished to leave. These were only precautionary moves. Additional indication of the real tension was the steady influx of Japanese divisions into Indo-China.

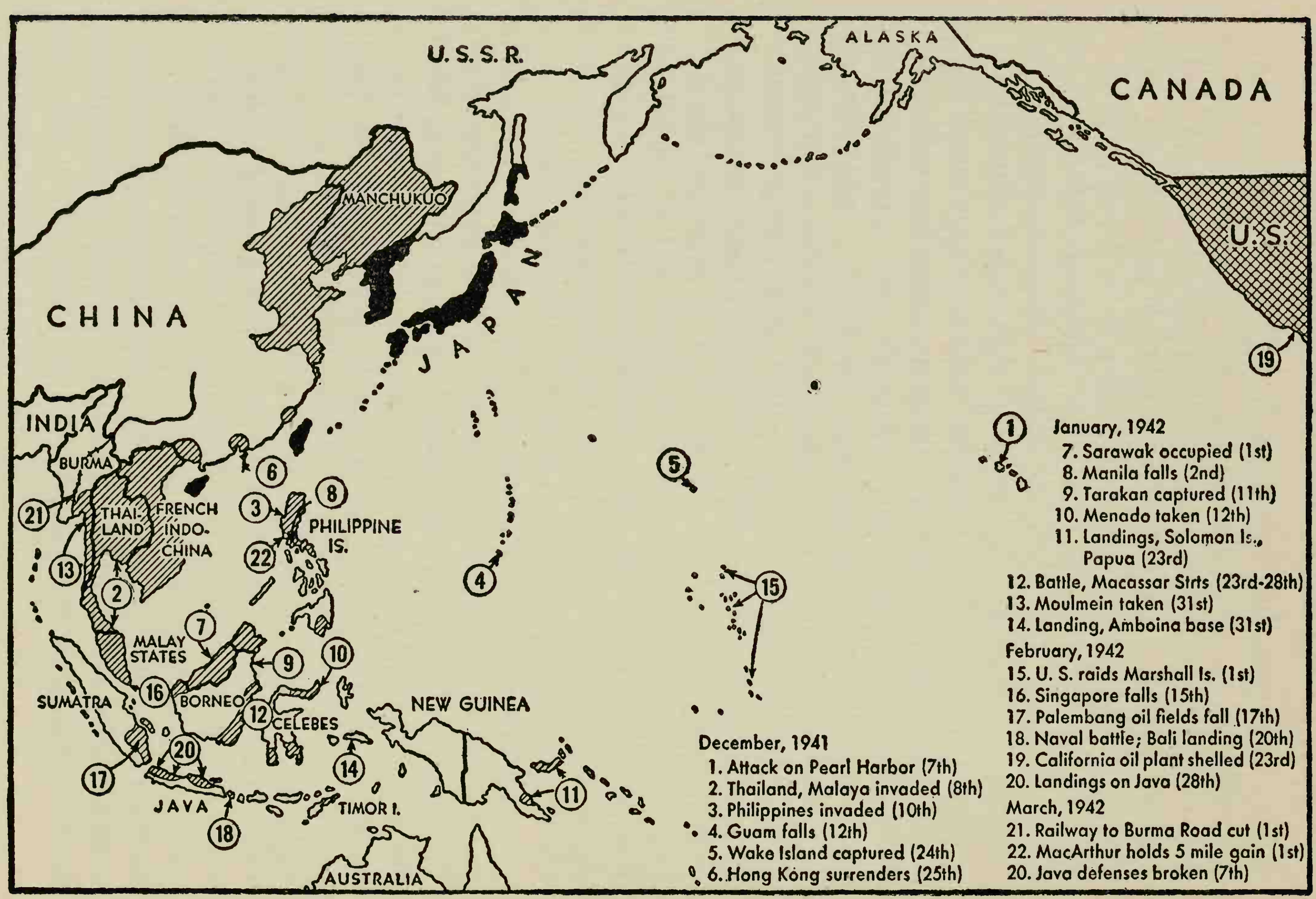
The die was cast for Japan on November 26, 1941, when Secretary of State Cordell Hull handed Admiral Nomura a statement of the only basis on which it was felt a peaceful settlement with the United States could be negotiated. Its terms called for the abandonment by Japan of her "New Order in Asia," the relinquishment of territorial gains in China, and a promise of adherence to commitments under the Four Power and Nine Power Treaties of 1921. In turn, the Hull statement promised Japan full participation in all Far Eastern matters on a basis of peaceful procedure, equality of nations, and liberalization of trade.

Japan's answer was war. At 2:20 P. M. on the afternoon of Sunday, December 7, 1941, the Japanese representatives in Washington submitted their documentary reply to the Hull proposals. The reaction of the Secretary of State was instantaneous; "In all my fifty years of public service, I have never seen a document that was more crowded with infamous falsehoods and distortions on a scale so huge that I never imagined until today that any government on this planet was capable of uttering them." At 2:20 P. M. the White House heard of the dawn attack on Pearl Harbor. Three hours later Japan acknowledged her act by formally declaring war on the United States. The next day, December 8, with only one dissenting vote in the House and none in the

Senate, Congress declared that a state of war existed between the United States and the Japanese Empire. Three days later, December 11, Hitler and Mussolini brought their subjected peoples into a war against us. Congress acknowledged these acts, and by the afternoon of December 11, 1941, the United States was at war with the three Axis Powers—Japan, Germany, Italy.

The weeks since December 7, 1941, have shown that Japan is now accomplishing by force of arms what she had failed to accomplish by less open means. Her military drive is aimed southward to Australia and westward to India. At the present writing (March 15, 1942) her campaign has established control over a substantial part of the vast region embraced by her dream of the "New Order in Asia." Australia, threatened with invasion, looks to America to reinforce her slender military, naval, and air units in the anticipated fight for existence. New Zealand and India rush the mobilization of their forces against the day when the Japanese sweep may reach their shores (*see* Map 37, p. 204).

Japan's successes, like those of the Nazis, illustrate perfectly the striking power which can be generated by all-out military preparation over a period of years. No small factor in that power is the underestimation by potential opponents of the strength which has been developed. Striking power is further enhanced when the fighting forces are animated by a fanaticism so strong that no losses are regarded as too great a price to pay for immediate success. The Japanese objective is obvious. Once she has established mastery over the entire western Pacific region, our difficulties and hazards of a counteroffensive by the United States are enormously increased (*see* Note 15, p. 263).


U. S. S. R.
ALASKA
CANADA
U.S.
CHINA
MANCHUKUO
JAPAN
INDIA
BURMA
THAILAND
FRENCH INDO-CHINA
PHILIPPINE IS.
MALAY STATES
SUMATRA
BORNEO
CELEBES
NEW GUINEA
JAVA
TIMOR I.
AUSTRALIA
December, 1941
1. Attack on Pearl Harbor (7th)
2. Thailand, Malaya invaded (8th)
3. Philippines invaded (10th)
4. Guam falls (12th)
5. Wake Island captured (24th)
6. Hong Kong surrenders (25th)
January, 1942
7. Sarawak occupied (1st)
8. Manila falls (2nd)
9. Tarakan captured (11th)
10. Menado taken (12th)
11. Landings, Solomon Is., Papua (23rd)
12. Battle, Macassar Strts (23rd-28th)
13. Moulmein taken (31st)
14. Landing, Amboina base (31st)
February, 1942
15. U. S. raids Marshall Is. (1st)
16. Singapore falls (15th)
17. Palembang oil fields fall (17th)
18. Naval battle; Bali landing (20th)
19. California oil plant shelled (23rd)
20. Landings on Java (28th)
March, 1942
21. Railway to Burma Road cut (1st)
22. MacArthur holds 5 mile gain (1st)
20. Java defenses broken (7th)

37. JAPAN'S ADVANCE, MARCH, 1942

Behind her emphasis on speed lies also her recognition of the weaknesses in the national economy which supports her military effort. For Japan, a long war, a slow war, is swift suicide. She hopes to avert it by even swifter seizure of every United Nations stronghold within reach of her armed forces, then to effect a juncture with her European allies for a final decision. How far her hopes will be realized rests not only on the strength and speed of her blows but on the speed and effectiveness with which the United Nations prepare and deliver their counteroffensives.

CHAPTER XII

LATIN AMERICA FACING A WORLD AT WAR

September, 1939—

> The core of our defense is the faith we have in the institutions we defend. The Americas will not be scared or threatened into the ways the dictators want us to follow.
>
> Franklin D. Roosevelt
> *Broadcast to the Americas,* October 12, 1940

As the republics of latin america look upon a world torn by a war involving the peoples of five continents, they are faced with unpleasant realities, heavy responsibilities, and problems difficult of solution. We of the Americas, North and South alike, have a common heritage. We are young countries. Our ancestors gave their lives to gain freedom from would-be tyrants of other lands. This freedom was born of blood and privation; it has been preserved only by force of arms and by the will of the people. The republics of this hemisphere, individually and collectively, have pledged that they will never forsake it.

The problems that confront the nations south of the Rio Grande affect the future of the whole hemisphere. Their satisfactory solution is therefore of the utmost importance to the United States. There must be no chance that any portion of the lands between the Rio Grande and the Straits of Magellan will fall under control of an unfriendly power; that danger has been and is a very real one. The technique of Japanese and German aggression is that of the Axis trader paying the way for some form of totalitarianism followed by the conquering troops of Hitler and Hirohito. The peaceful existence of the United States depends upon a free Canada to the north and free nations to the south, guarding against the possibility of the establishment of a base for any sudden attack on our sea lanes or on our country itself.

The ability of Latin America to produce and export vast quantities of foodstuffs and industrial raw materials is of prime importance to the United States in this present war. Oil from Venezuela and Mexico, nitrates from Chile, tin from Bolivia, coffee from Brazil, corn, wheat and beef from Argentina, and fruit from the Central American countries, all are needed in the war effort of the United States and her Allies. In the production of these foodstuffs and raw materials, Latin America is the richest section of the world which is not under the direct domination of one or more of the world's great Powers.

Before the outbreak of the war a great proportion of the trade of the Latin American countries was with Europe. In 1938, 55 per cent of their total exports went to Europe. In certain countries, in Argentina and Uruguay, for example, that proportion was as high as 75 per cent. The combined blockades of Germany and Great Britain caused an enormous disruption in their economic life, depending as they did on finished goods from abroad in exchange for the exports sent across the Atlantic. To buy plows, mining equipment, rails, locomotives, and hundreds of other things to carry on their production and develop their infant industries, they needed their export markets.

An extreme example of the dependence of some of these countries on their export markets is that of Venezuela. The production of oil is virtually her sole industry, representing 90 per cent of her exports. In 1937 she exported over 175 million barrels of crude oil. The elimination of this export trade would cause serious economic depression, followed in turn by a serious internal political upheaval. Venezuela has so far escaped any material reduction of her oil exports, for the Allies can absorb her supply. But this cannot be said of the other Latin American countries.

Extension of the British blockade, decrease in normal shipping facilities, and the general "tightening of the belt" policy of the warring nations all combined to reduce the extra-hemisphere export markets of Latin America. The surpluses of food and raw materials piled up. With the growth of unemployment, the peoples of many Latin American countries manifested unrest and discontent. The governments adopted various expedients to remedy the situation; Argentina attempted to sell her surplus corn for fuel at eight dollars a ton. But none of the attempts to solve the problem proved adequate.

The political history of the countries of the world indicates that there is a general tendency to blame the government for an unsatisfactory situation. The peoples of the Latin American countries are no different from those of other countries. Their considerable political unrest obviously created a fruitful field for the agents of Fascism who have been busy in strategic localities. These started movements to overthrow existing governments and to set up new ones with pro-Axis leanings.

In 1940 an investigating committee of the Uruguayan Congress found evidence of a German plot to overthrow the government of that republic in order to transform the country into an agricultural colony of the German Reich. The Uruguayan government nipped the plot in the bud. The alertness of the other American nations to the importance of a united front was shown by the actions of Brazil and the United States. Rifles were shipped to the Uruguayan government by Brazil, and the United States cruisers, *Quincy* and *Wichita,* were dispatched to the scene. The United States minister to Uruguay announced that the United States was prepared to crush any activity from non-American sources which tended to endanger economic or political freedom of the Americas.

Obviously there could have been but one basic purpose behind these moves of the Nazi agents. Political domination over this section of the world would pave the way, in the event of an Axis victory, to exploitation of its rich natural resources. This exploitation, in turn, would fit into Hitler's plan for the political and economic domination of the world. To quote the master mind himself, in phrases from various speeches, "We shall create a new Germany in Brazil. . . Our youth must learn to colonize. . . The Argentine and Bolivia are now in the front line of interest. . . If we had Mexico, we could solve all our difficulties. . . Mexico is a country that cries out for a capable master. . . If there ever was a place where democracy is senseless and suicidal, it is South America."

The countries of Latin America have all seen Axis trading practices in Europe. They have realized that Axis traders are not acting as individuals, but rather as government agents. They have seen Axis political penetration follow foreign trade penetration. During the period from 1933 to 1939 they have experienced the Axis attempt to acquire a permanent hold over Latin American markets and supplies. They have seen the similarity of the pattern in Europe and in Latin America. They have felt the shadow of Axis control over them if an Axis victory is achieved in Europe. Naturally they turn to strengthen their resistance against economic penetration.

Ever since President Monroe enunciated the Monroe Doctrine in his famous speech to Congress in 1823, it has been the traditional policy of our government to refuse to allow any European nation to interfere in the affairs of countries of the New World, and to forestall acquisition of new colonies in this hemisphere. Prior to development of the Axis methods of economic aggression, this doctrine could be carried out by preventing either the landing of hostile troops in the Western Hemisphere or the acquisition of possessions by diplomacy. But the methods of economic penetration present a new problem. Through economic means a country can actually be brought almost completely under the domination of another country without the use of armed forces or diplomatic action.

The Monroe Doctrine has always meant "Americas for Americans." It has not been too difficult to enforce. Other countries seemed to accept it. That the countries of Latin America would all heartily co-operate in enforcing the policy seemed to be a correct assumption. From 1823 onward, the British were also interested in preventing any other great Power from obtaining a foothold across their sea lanes; in effect, the British fleet was a bulwark to the Monroe Doctrine.

Recently we have had cause to re-examine our assumptions. Latin America needed capital from foreign nations to initiate her industries and to open up her natural resources, even as the United States needed capital in its early days. The payment of interest and principal on these investments depended on exports. Fluctuations in the demand for raw materials abroad, coupled with the turbulent political conditions incident to growing pains at home, often endangered the investments made by foreign interests. The United States at times found it necessary to step in when it seemed that the Monroe Doctrine was being indirectly threatened. This policy was actuated by a desire for the establishment of political stability which would protect investments and remove the possibility of European interference on that score. But the young Latin American governments possibly felt that the United States was meddling, was playing a part as the "Colossus of the North."

Beginning with the year 1869; occasional Pan-American conferences were held to discuss the mutual problems of the Western Hemisphere nations. Certain Latin American countries apparently came to some of these conferences with only partial enthusiasm, since they felt that these often were dominated by the United States. In order to build the feeling of unity in the Western Hemisphere, it was necessary that each nation should realize that she was contributing, according to her ability, to the defense and general welfare of the hemisphere. Each country of the hemisphere must feel that the Monroe Doctrine is a hemispherical doctrine, not a United States doctrine enforced by the United States alone.

In 1933, under the leadership of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, we enunciated a new policy in the Pan-

American meeting at Montevideo. This has come to be known as the "Good Neighbor Policy," based on and supplementing the Monroe Doctrine. At this meeting, Secretary Hull stated that the policy of the United States was to respect the absolute independence and the political integrity of all countries, large or small. Under this new policy, we eliminated the Platt Amendment to our treaty with Cuba, thus renouncing the treaty right to have some guidance over the affairs of Cuba. Gradually the "Good Neighbor Policy" has been accepted as a Pan-American policy and has begun to yield fruit. Under the impetus of Axis threats from abroad, every American nation is beginning to feel a definite responsibility for co-operative action and for contributing everything within its power to maintain that national freedom for which its peoples have fought and died in the past.

During the period since 1933, a series of conferences has been held among the nations of the Western Hemisphere for the purpose of effecting closer relations between those countries. From these conferences emerged many resolutions and declarations. After the outbreak of war in 1939, one such declaration stated that a "safety zone," including all areas within 300 miles of the American shores, was to be free from any and all hostile acts by any belligerent nations. The declaration made no suggestion as to the use of force to compel acceptance of this "safety zone"; consequently, it has never been recognized by any belligerent. But it is interesting as an example of co-operation. It also is interesting in actual results, since it proved again that words, unsupported by armed force, are valueless in this world at war. But out of these conferences there has grown a new co-operation in neutrality, economics, and later, defense.

Out of them there has grown the new interpretation of the Monroe Doctrine; the interpretation that it is a policy of deep concern to all the governments of American republics. United by the "Good Neighbor Policy" and opposition to the common Axis enemy, the Western Hemisphere has now attained a working program of mutual co-operation.

Hemispheric co-operation has been strengthened both diplomatically and economically. The United States has launched a program to reinforce Latin American economic life against the inroads of the Axis. We have a direct interest in establishing closer relations. From the Latin American countries come many of the raw materials needed by our factories working on war orders. Products such as tin, copper, oil, manganese, tungsten, have been imported from Asia and other distant places. Today these sources of supply are endangered or suspended. In many instances the sea lanes to Latin America are shorter than to other parts of the world. The strengthening of Latin American economy during the war years will enable them to assume their natural place in world trade, free from domination, in the years of peace to come.

The method by which the United States has undertaken this economic program is a somewhat involved one. We have purchased goods and we have loaned money. The simplest solution was to buy what the Latin Americans had. Actually it is not simple in practice. There are many Latin American products of which we already have surpluses, cotton and wheat among them. The United States, however, proceeded to buy noncompetitive products, like tin, rubber, manganese, and certain foods. We attempted to make Latin America our source of supply rather than Asia, Africa, and distant countries. The Latin American countries were benefited by this policy. They obtained new markets, and they could obtain goods more easily from the United States. Many of the products of Latin America which compete with those of the United States in peacetime are needed by us in wartime. In certain cases, the United States has purchased even more goods than we needed in order to support the economies of Latin American countries and to keep valuable war materials from falling into the hands of the Axis powers.

American businessmen usually have dealt with each other and with foreign countries on the principle of payment in cash or short term credit. The Latin American countries never have had much cash. They have lacked the cash with which to buy machinery and supplies to build railroads and public utilities and to develop their mines and factories. It has been necessary for them to wait for the next year's crop or next year's sales to get money for payment. Through the Export-Import Bank, the United States has undertaken a series of loans to solve the Latin American problem of ready cash. Generally these loans never leave the United States. The money is paid by the Latin Americans to American businessmen for rails, locomotives, generators, and mining machinery, by which they hope to increase their production and thus repay the loans.

But all expedients to which the countries of this hemisphere are resorting today are temporary. In the long run, Latin-American surpluses of wheat, cotton, coffee, corn, and beef must be sold in a free world market, for the United States cannot absorb all of these. Should the world market become an Axis market under control of Hitler, we have a long series of precedents to assure us that political control of Latin American countries is likely to follow. The problem of hemisphere defense involves world defense against Hitlerism, because it is only in a free world that the Latin American countries can survive as independent nations.

Latin America's position and importance in the defense of the Western Hemisphere is well expressed in a statement made in 1940 by Major General George V. Strong, former assistant chief of staff, long before we became involved in the war. "Under present conditions and in view of the present development of weapons," said General Strong, "this hemisphere is safe from aggression from abroad just as long as two conditions obtain: (1) that the Panama Canal is open for transport of the United States fleet and (2) that an aggressor from abroad has no bases in this hemisphere from which to operate." If the Panama Canal is closed, our fleet is divided between two oceans, and the nearest available route is around Cape Horn, a route involving many extra days of travel.

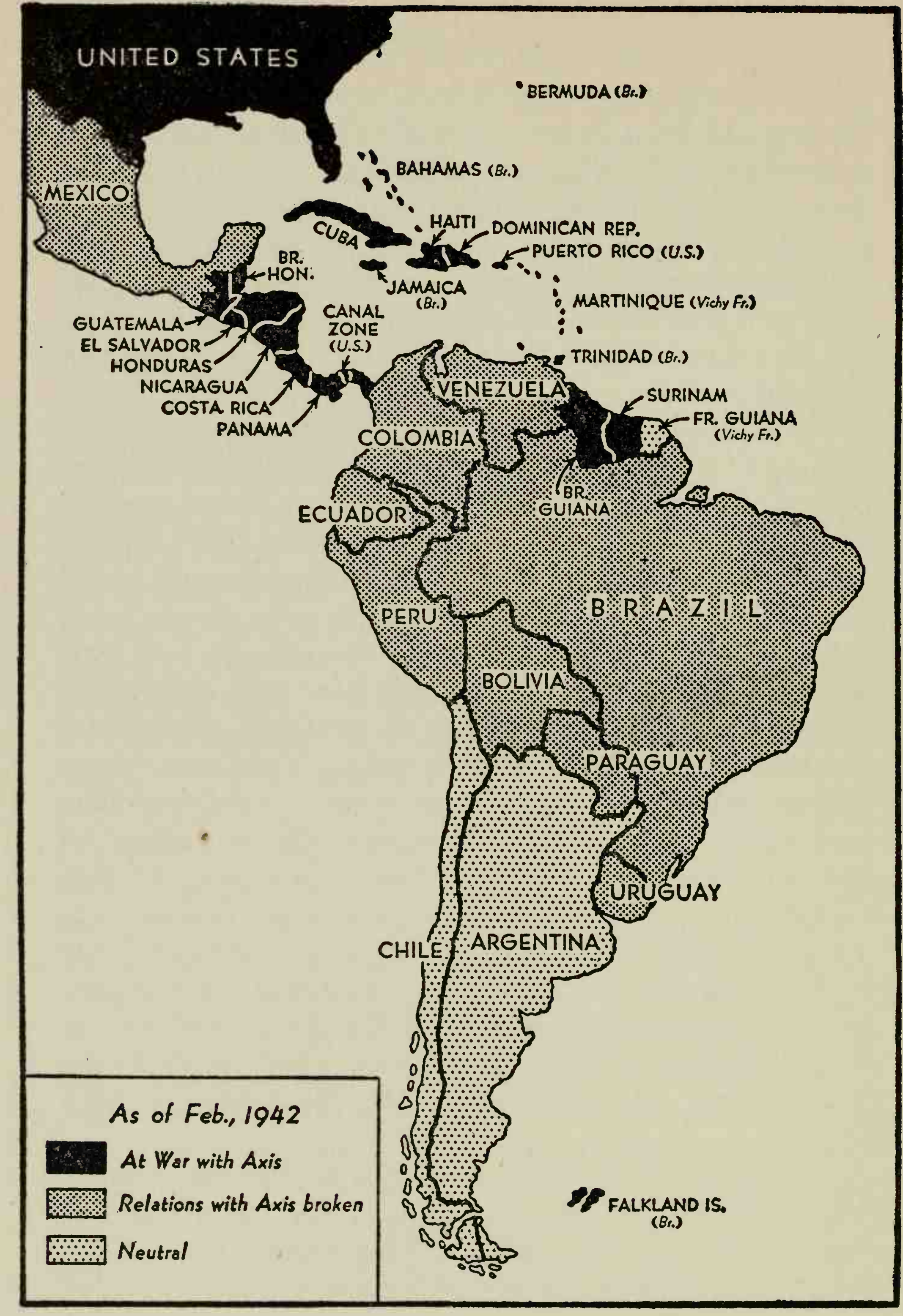
The United States has many island outposts in the vicinity of the Canal to guard its approaches. But the land areas north and south of the Canal and at the tip of the South American continent also have enormous strategic importance. In enemy hands, these areas would complicate the problem of hemisphere defense. The importance of a feeling of collective responsibility for the defense of this hemisphere is obvious. If the "Good Neighbor Policy" imparts this feeling and results in a will to resist both political and military aggression, it will have succeeded. Because of the development of modern methods in armament and the lack of production facilities in Latin America, it is a fact that individual nations there cannot be expected to resist effectively the determined aggression of a first-class fighting power effectively for any extended period. But if these countries possess the will to make an initial stand, the United States, in time, can furnish the military aid necessary to defend the hemisphere.

Our enemies realize the importance of Latin America and have made great efforts, both military and political, to meet the situation that exists today. One of the pleas of Nazi propaganda, the pure race idea, falls on deaf ears in Latin America. But the melting pot in Latin America has not functioned as successfully as it has in the United States. There are large population groups in several countries of Latin America that still are completely unassimilated. They retain their basic European or Asiatic viewpoint and even their allegiance to their former homeland. In Peru and Brazil, there are large numbers of Japanese who cling to their home country ties. In southern Brazil there are between half a million and a million German subjects who live more or less to themselves in German communities and who hold to their own culture and way of life. They operate their own schools and have refused to intermarry with the native population. Among them there is no military organization as such, but there are many organizations like singing clubs, shooting clubs, and gymnastic clubs which might be converted readily into military units. And a tremendous amount of Nazi propaganda is being disseminated. Brazil has taken measures against these activities, but the effect has been largely to unite the Germans into a spirited racial group (*see* Note 16, p. 266).

It is an unhappy fact that there are these undigested foreign elements with pro-Axis leanings. It is through members of these groups, as well as through native fifth columnists and German and Italian military missions that powerful influence has been brought to bear on public officials. But, nevertheless, the recent events at the history-making conference at Rio de Janeiro indicate that our Latin American neighbors are willing to accept our war stand against the Axis and to take positive steps to assist us.

The United States has not been asleep to the Axis tactics of "boring from within" in Latin American countries. For some years military instructors have been stationed there for the purpose of training their armies. We have opened negotiations for the erection and use of strategic bases. Before our entrance into the war, we had practically cleared the Latin American skies of Axis commercial aviation, and we now have sent our troops to Dutch Guiana to establish a strategic strongpoint against possible Axis blitzkrieg tactics. The Latin American countries have been given positive proof that they are willing to co-operate wholeheartedly in defense of the hemisphere, south to the Horn. The climax of that co-operation came at the Rio de Janeiro conference during the week of January 19, 1942, when the twenty-one republics of this hemisphere passed resolutions recommending a complete break with the Axis; and, except for Argentina and Chile, all of them immediately broke off economic and diplomatic relations with the Axis nations.

As a result of this conference at Rio de Janeiro, Axis ambassadors and consuls with their staffs are no longer permitted to function. This should remove the centers of propaganda and sabotage which have been


UNITED STATES
BERMUDA (Br.)
BAHAMAS (Br.)
MEXICO
CUBA
HAITI
DOMINICAN REP.
PUERTO RICO (U.S.)
BR. HON.
JAMAICA (Br.)
MARTINIQUE (Vichy Fr.)
GUATEMALA
EL SALVADOR
HONDURAS
NICARAGUA
COSTA RICA
PANAMA
CANAL ZONE (U.S.)
TRINIDAD (Br.)
VENEZUELA
SURINAM
FR. GUIANA (Vichy Fr.)
COLOMBIA
BR. GUIANA
ECUADOR
BRAZIL
PERU
BOLIVIA
PARAGUAY
URUGUAY
CHILE
ARGENTINA
FALKLAND IS. (Br.)
As of Feb., 1942
At War with Axis
Relations with Axis broken
Neutral

38. SOUTH AMERICA

a cause of great worry to the United States. Enforcement of export control and the freezing of all Axis assets will become more effective. The gates will be closed even more tightly on those avenues through which the Axis partners strive to secure needed supplies.

The Latin American countries are today confronted by grave problems. There are the disturbing economic consequences of the war. There are the activities of foreign elements within their borders. There is the bleak future which would certainly be the result of an Axis victory. The future hope of these nations rests on the determination of the United States to defend the whole hemisphere against the inroads of Axis aggression and to achieve a better world after the war through the policy of mutual co-operation and solidarity within the hemisphere. The countries of North and South America have achieved more complete co-operation than any other similar group in past or present history. The war was not of their making, nor was involvement in it of their choosing. But they have learned the lesson of collective action. They will not be broken one by one; together they will march toward victory.

CHAPTER XIII

NATIONAL DEFENSE

—December 7, 1941

> To be prepared for war is one of the most effectual means of preserving peace.
>
> GEORGE WASHINGTON
> *To Congress,* January 8, 1790

WHEN WAR COMES TO THE UNITED STATES, the men in uniform—soldiers and sailors and marines—go off to fight that war. The military strategy (and the word "military" applies, of course, to all branches of the armed forces) is determined, and should be determined by the War and Navy Departments.

But before war comes, the Military Policy, which may also be called the National Defense Policy, is determined by the members of Congress and by the President of the United States who, in a democracy, are responsible to the will of the people. This Military Policy is expressed in that body of laws and rules and regulations which has been laid down by Congress and the president and which affects our armed forces. These rules and regulations include decisions about the size of the forces, the length and method of service, the pay and promotion of the men, and other administrative details.

These two allies, Military Strategy and Military Policy, always interrelated and mutually dependent, are in measure independent. In some instances, the Military

Policy is influenced by the experience and advice of the generals and admirals. In many instances, the Military Strategy is dependent on the Military Policy which, in turn, is dependent on public opinion.

One of the six basic purposes laid down in the preamble to the Constitution of the United States, to "provide for the common defense," is fundamental to the fulfillment of the other five. It is no exaggeration to state that a nation unable to provide the safeguards for the preservation of its liberty cannot hope to preserve that liberty against the depredations of aggressors. Force does not guarantee freedom. But the lessons of Poland, of the Scandinavian countries, and of France clearly demonstrate that without available force there can be no guaranty of freedom.

America has been a peace-loving nation, an optimistic nation, an idealistic nation. It has always wished for a peace that would be permanent. It has always felt a large army and navy to be unnecessary and possibly prejudicial to the cause of peace in the world. In optimism and idealism, Americans have been unable to distinguish between the needs of military efficiency and the evils of militarism. Every generation since 1700 has experienced a great war.

Another influence on the military policy of the United States has been the very practical influence of economy. At the end of each war the weary taxpayer has done his best to cut military expenditures to the very bone. In the short run, it was cheaper to hope for peace than to prepare for a war that, it was hoped, would never come.

A third influence is deep-rooted in our American life. Our founding fathers deeply distrusted the existence of a large standing army. Too often they had seen the available military power used to oppress the peoples of the country which supported it. The Constitutional Convention proposed that the standing army should be limited to a few thousand troops; that proposal was defeated by Washington's suggestion of an amendment to the effect that "no foreign nation shall invade the United States at any time with more than three thousand troops." But the distrust of a standing army has persisted; the average citizen distrusts the support of a large body of men whose work is not daily demonstrable.

A fourth influence has been our American belief that millions of men will spring to arms in times of danger. This patriotic faith has always been kept; but in modern times it overlooks one of the salient features of modern warfare. In the early days of history, wars were fought with the saber and rifle; today they are fought with machine guns and planes and tanks. Nobody wants to overlook the gallantry of the men of Valley Forge, of the Argonne. But gallantry in action is only the final element of victory in modern war; the first elements of victory lie in the factories, which cannot spring to full wartime production overnight, and in men schooled by months and years of military training.

There have been other influences on the military policy of the United States, but these four are indicative. They are all based on American idealism and optimism. Until the present conflict, we have never adequately prepared for participation in war; yet we have never lost a war.

After the first World War, the war to end all wars, these influences on the military policy of the United States were especially strong. They gave rise to a number of remarkable paradoxes, to a body of conflicting concepts that became basic in our national life. The United States was the most powerful nation in the world; yet it was militarily weak and unprepared. We pointed out, with truth, that we hate war; yet we insisted, with equal truth, that we would spring to arms to protect our rights. We declared that we would not shirk our moral responsibility for world leadership; yet we insisted that we should mind our own business. We warned that armament led to war; yet we insisted that military strength would prevent all attacks. We decided not to fortify our Pacific Islands; yet we insisted that we would defend our interests in the Far East. We differed vigorously, even violently, on the policies of isolation and intervention, of enforcing peace and resisting aggression.

These contradictions were settled but slowly in the minds of the American people. In times of peace or of distant conflict the American people are reluctant to take a definite stand on military affairs. They tend to trust in our geographical position, in the success of our foreign policy, in anything but military preparation.

In point of time, America has three lines of defense. The first is the diplomatic line, under the direction of the State Department. Through the medium of diplomacy the United States is protected from foreign conflict as long as that conflict does not take the form of armed fighting. When the diplomatic line is broken, the American Navy in the two great oceans protects our continent from armed invasion. Behind the Navy stands the Army, ready to resist any land attack. We have tended to place too much reliance on the efficacy of diplomacy. Especially have we been blind to the fact that the modern airplane has obliterated our geographical isolation.

But in spite of all these facts, steps were taken toward the military defense of the nation almost as soon as the first World War was over. The National Defense Act of 1920 was our first planned military program in a time of peace. This act created a workable relation between the Regular Army, the National Guard, and the Organized Reserves. The training of the units of the National Guard was carried on under the direction of the officers who had already seen service. Our reserve of officers was constantly increased by the Reserve Officers' Training Corps program in the colleges (ROTC) and the Citizens' Military Training Camp program outside of the colleges (CMTC). The Officers' Reserve Corps was under constant, though not intensive, training. At the beginning of the present emergency it was able to give one hundred thousand officers to the defense effort. An assistant secretary of war was authorized to head a research staff, and an industrial mobilization plan was drawn and kept continually up to date.

For the first ten years of the operation of the National Defense Act of 1920 the world was fairly quiet. There were scattered wars, local conflicts, but these were remote from the interest and interests of America. In the rising tide of national prosperity, military expenditures were considered unnecessary and even wasteful. The armed forces got along on the diminishing appropriations given by the Congress and the people. The framework for defense had been erected; but it remained only a skeleton.

That we did not enter the present conflict with only a skeleton is to the credit of America's leadership during the past ten years. Against every obstacle raised by those who demanded peace at any price, by others who felt that all would be well if we minded our own business, by still others who acted openly or covertly as enemy agents in this country, American leadership took the steps necessary to begin the development of our fully armed power.

That development belongs almost wholly to the past two and a half years. Certain handicaps had to be overcome. More was needed than an agreement between the nation's defense experts as to the strength of our probable enemies. The immediate and latent hazards to our national safety and the means of countering those hazards had to be decided upon. The people as a whole had to be convinced of these things, if Congress was to pass the necessary legislation to prepare for the coming struggle. Twenty years of propaganda had done much to blind the nation to realities. As the Gallup polls and other nation-wide surveys of opinion had shown, our steadily rising hostility to the Axis and all its works failed to bring a corresponding determination to meet the Axis on its own ground with its own weapons. We preferred a gradual increase in our defensive strength, enough perhaps to resist the Axis at some remote day in the future, if ever that day should come.

A second obstacle was the Neutrality Act of 1937, as revised from the earlier Act of 1935. In substance its provisions made it all but impossible for us to give any practical aid to any belligerent, regardless of whether that belligerent was the aggressor or the defender. In effect, that Act constituted open and direct aid to the aggressors, the Axis. They had launched the war only after they were armed to the teeth. Their victims, blocked by the Neutrality Act in their efforts to get fully effective aid from the United States, and with their own industries suffering heavily from the German bombers, were nearly helpless. As pointed out later by administration leaders, the Neutrality Act marked the peak of America's refusal to look realities in the face.

In the face of such handicaps the effort was made to acquaint our people with the realities. As early as 1937 the president, sensing the meaning of what had been happening in the Old World for six years, publicly demanded a system of quarantine against all aggressors. A year later he announced that any attack on Canada would find America ranged beside her northern neighbor. Early in 1939 he called on Congress to provide funds for a moderate increase in our armed forces. By that time two thirds of our people were convinced that an Axis domination of Europe and Asia would be followed by an all-out attack against the United States. Nevertheless, a bare third of the nation declared themselves willing to risk any step which might lead to war.

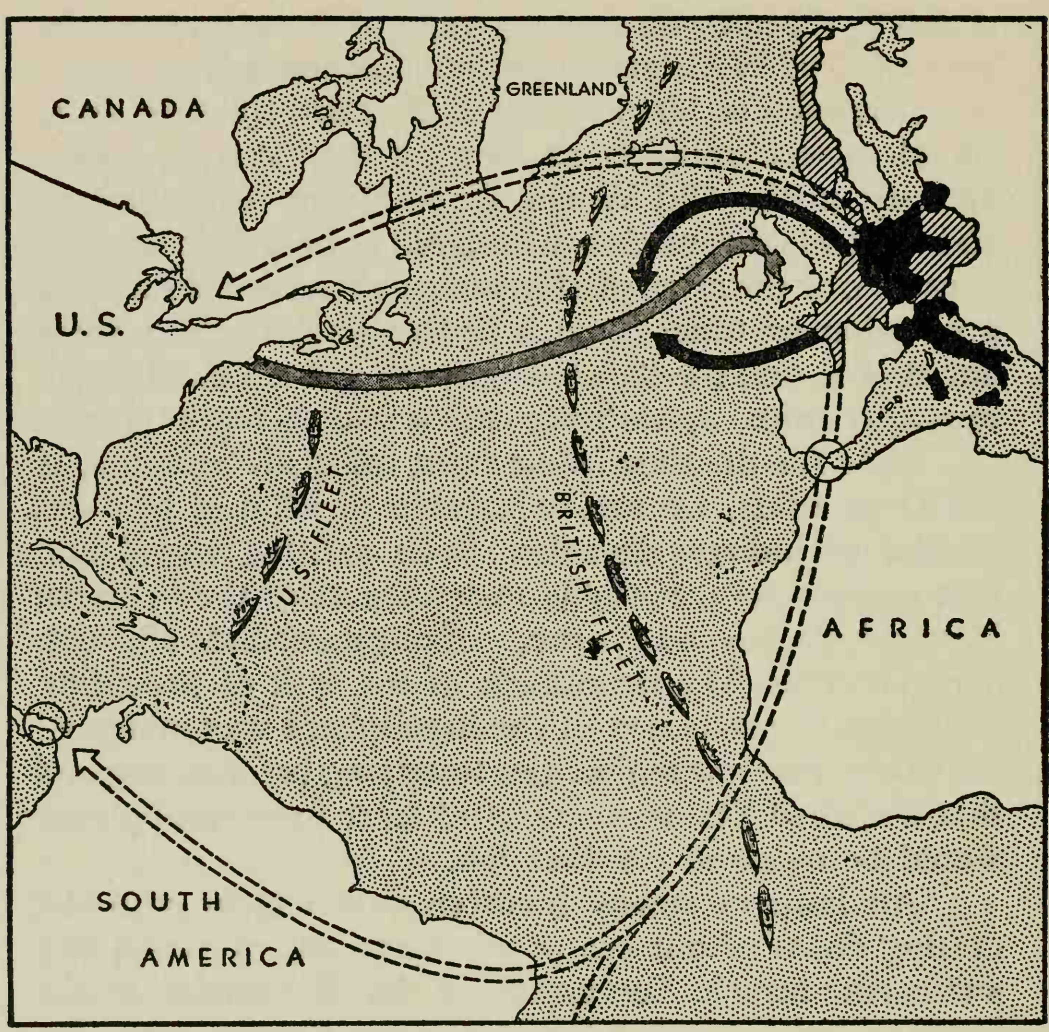
America's preparations for war may be classified roughly under two heads: the preparation of our own fighting machine, and the provision of effective aid to the nations fighting the Axis. Complete differentiation between the two classifications is not always possible; for example, the occupation of Iceland by American troops served both to aid the British and to strengthen our own defenses. The Selective Service Act of 1940 was the greatest step in the preparation of our fighting forces. The passage of the Lend-Lease Bill in 1941, providing for the delivery of all material aid to the anti-Axis nations, was the greatest step in the other classification of our effort.

It was not until November 17, 1941, that Congress repealed the Neutrality Act and so reasserted the traditional American principle of the freedom of the seas. The coming of war three weeks later would have automatically repealed the Act anyway; but those three weeks were utilized in the arming of our merchant vessels.

Continental United States is relatively safe from actual, direct invasion as long as the Axis is denied mastery of the Old World. Once Hitler holds Europe and Asia, his shipyards can outbuild us by a wide margin. Invasion, or the attempt at invasion, then becomes merely a question of time. Even now the waters which wash our shores, and the air above us, are at least partly open to enemy raids, as we have discovered in recent weeks.

Safe for the time being from full-scale invasion, if not from raids, we are vulnerable to what is best described as indirect invasion. Such a drive would aim first to get a solid foothold in some part of the Western Hemisphere, beyond the range of our immediate effective counteraction. The magnitude of the task of providing full military protection of the hemisphere was indicated in 1940 by military authorities testifying before Congress that a United States Army of at least four million men would be required for that job.

An indirect enemy invasion would open with the cutting down of our sea power by means of aerial and submarine attack. Successful, in that the enemy might be expected to launch a massed air assault with the landing of parachute troops in vulnerable areas. If those areas were in Latin America he would expect assistance, perhaps substantial assistance, from his nationals living in that part of the world. Years before the Nazis opened their full-dress drive in the Old World, considerable groups of Germans, along with some Italians, were being organized for such a final showdown. Some of these


CANADA
GREENLAND
U. S.
U. S. FLEET
BRITISH FLEET
AFRICA
SOUTH
AMERICA

39. INVASION ROUTES

were well supplied with arms and ammunition; in instances, regular military drills were the order.

The Latin American states, with few exceptions, are unable to cope with such double invasion from without and within. They lack the forces and equipment to stand up against modern mechanized warfare. They must look to the United States to provide most of what they would need in that respect. In the long run, success of an invasion of this character would depend on whether or not it could be backed up by water-borne troops and supplies. Our naval forces would at least have to be held in check by the enemy to permit his convoys to move to their destination. Even if such an enemy effort failed, it would most certainly divert a considerable part of our strength at a time when decisive action was necessary in some other vital war sector.

There are two logical routes of enemy invasion across the Atlantic (*see* Map 39, p. 228). The southern route might use one or more of the following for its jump-off points: Dakar (Vichy France), the Azores, Madeiras, and Cape Verde Islands (Portugal); the Canary Islands (Spain). We are in the habit of thinking of these places as being far distant. So they are—from New York. We make the additional mistake of thinking of the Latin American states as neighbors. So they are—but distant neighbors. Europe, by way of Dakar, is very much nearer to some of the most important parts of Latin America than are our bases, even those in the Caribbean. Except for Mexico, Latin America is just as much overseas to us as any part of Europe (*see* Note 17, p. 268).

Once an invader had established himself securely in South America, we would find ourselves fighting a rearguard action to protect the Panama Canal. The advantage would be wholly with the enemy. Except for a miracle, it would become a matter of time until the day of the last-ditch fight to save the homeland. Therefore, our first line of defense against an enemy advancing across the south Atlantic rests very largely on Britain's survival as a great naval power, even more on her ability to carry the fight to the Axis. A war which looks to defense alone is a lost war.

The northern Atlantic invasion route lies by way of Iceland, Greenland, Canada. Should the British Isles fall, the enemy's problem by that route would be greatly simplified. We have guaranteed to defend Canada, but the defense of so vast an area, with a population of less than twelve million, is no easy matter. A successful enemy drive by air could cripple the immense armament industry still expanding in Ontario and in our north central states, the very heart of the "arsenal of democracy." The distance from Greenland to our north central industrial area is less than the distance from Greenland to New York.

In the Pacific our vulnerability is relatively less than in the Atlantic. The shortest route for an invader lies by way of the sparsely settled areas of Alaska and western Canada. But we must remember that a very real threat can develop by this route. The southerly route, aimed at any point south of the Rio Grande, offers considerably greater hazards to an enemy so long as Hawaii is held and substantial naval forces are maintained in the Pacific.

Today, most intelligent Americans are aware of these dangers; two years ago, few besides our defense experts had given them attention. In that interval of time much has been done to plug the holes in the defensive barriers which protect both coasts of the United States. Our Atlantic defense ring is a development which dates largely from September 2, 1940, when Britain granted us ninety-nine-year leases on a chain of bases extending from Newfoundland to British Guiana. Forty years earlier we had begun to build bases in the Carribbean, which in time was called an "American Lake." The new bases in that region, our occupation of Dutch Guiana in November of 1940, and the development of our existing bases make that title a correct one. At the northern end of the ring a line of advanced posts has been set up in Greenland and Iceland. The final tie to the British Isles has been established by the arrival of the new A.E.F. in Northern Ireland.

In the Pacific a defense ring extends from Alaska down through Midway, Johnston, Hawaii, and Samoa, and thence to the Panama Canal. Wake was once part of that chain; the Philippines and Guam were advanced posts for the protection of our Far Eastern interests. Of these bases, only Hawaii can be called an impregnable fortress. Nevertheless all of them, operating as separate parts of a single defense system, will make difficult either the secret or successful penetration of the defense line by any naval-and-air drive aimed at the western face of the continent.

A casual observer might have said before December that these chains of overseas bases gave us absolute protection against invasion. Today we know that a base is secure only if an enemy attack by water and air can be met and defeated when the blow falls. Every examination of the facts brings us back to the realization that our most vital advanced bases are the homelands and colonies of our allies, the United Nations. Unless they fall, there can be no serious move to break our defense lines. Through all the years since Japan's seizure of Manchuria in 1931 our margin of safety has been cut down step by step.

We have done everything possible to protect our continental shores from invasion. At the same time we have been building up the elements of our fighting force and the tremendous production lines which must keep it equipped. The invasion of Poland in 1939 found America operating under a long-standing defense plan of protecting our shores and guarding the sea lanes to our foreign possessions. Our Army was that provided for in the National Defense Act of 1920, in every sense a peacetime army; at least eighteen foreign nations boasted stronger land forces (*see* Note 18, p. 268). There were three components. The first, the Regular Army, was a skeleton organization of 174,000 officers and men used for full-strength garrisons in our overseas possessions and for "housekeeping" detachments in the continental United States. In time of danger it was to serve as the nucleus for a greater force. The second component, the National Guard, was a partially trained organization whose peacetime work was the coping with national disaster, fire, flood, and civil disturbance. In time of danger it was to serve as territorial units within the greater force. The third component, the Reserve, was largely a paper reserve of the entire man power of the nation including the partially trained Officers' Reserve Corps. In time of danger this component would provide the bulk of the greater force.

By the end of 1939 we were inching forward from that low level of our fighting power. Improvement in naval strength had in fact begun a few years earlier. Its former status is best described by Director Archibald MacLeish of the Office of Facts and Figures in his "Report to the Nation" dated January 14, 1942: "In 1932 the American Navy, becalmed against its will, found itself approaching a level below Britain, below Japan, below even France and Italy, in the number of its effective fighting ships."

The first real forward stride in rearmament had to await Hitler's swift conquest of western Europe in the spring of 1940. On June 14, 1940, Congress authorized an 11 per cent expansion in our naval forces. Five days later that figure was raised to 70 per cent. It was a first step in the creation of a two-ocean Navy. The second was to organize a separate unit, first called the Atlantic Patrol Force, later the Atlantic Fleet. With the bulk of our naval strength in the Pacific, where lay our greatest immediate danger, a separate and complete naval fighting force in the Atlantic had become a necessity. A third element, the Asiatic Fleet, made up of cruisers and smaller craft, had long been based on Manila. The expected increase in naval strength came but slowly in 1940, except for purchase and commissioning of merchant shipping for use as supply ships and auxiliaries. The 1941 record was markedly better; construction was speeded up and scores of new shipyards added their output. The strength of the marines, our "seagoing soldiers," was stepped up to keep pace with the Navy.

Naval strength consists of three elements, the Fleet, the bases, and the merchant marine. The last is enjoying its full share of development; before 1941 had ended, the full program of ocean-going cargo ship construction had been raised to fourteen hundred vessels, all to be completed before the end of 1942. Nothing approaching that effort has ever before been attempted by the United States or any other nation.

The Army which we began to build in 1940 is quite different in many respects not only from any army in our past history, but also from those mustered by other leading nations of today. Its fighting power, per man, per company, and per division is not surpassed by that of any other country. Its expansion began with the calling into federal service of the National Guard and the passage of the Selective Service Act of 1940. These two steps, with the progressive increases in the Regular establishment, were expected to raise our land forces to about 1,600,000 by October 1941, thereafter holding the strength at a level not higher than two million men. In August, Congress increased the period of service for selectees and National Guardsmen to thirty months, providing at the same time for the early release of trainees who had reached the age of twenty-eight before being inducted or who were affected by dependency. Those releases show clearly that as late as August of 1941 the country as a whole had no serious worries over our national security.

At the time of France's fall our air strength was relatively the weakest element of our defense system. Neither planes nor pilots existed in sufficient numbers to provide adequate defense against modern air attack for either the United States or any of its possessions. President Roosevelt laid down a program calling for the production of fifty thousand planes per year. To most people the figure seemed fantastic; today our annual production is rapidly approaching that rate. The annual output of fliers has been stepped up likewise—seven thousand in

1940; twelve thousand in 1941; a rate of fifteen thousand at the opening of 1942.

War, however, is something more than a death struggle in the front line, a dogfight at thirty thousand feet, or a test of fighting ship against fighting ship. It is estimated that the work of nineteen men behind the lines in field and forest and factory is needed to keep one man properly equipped at the front. Every advance in mechanization raises the ratio. It is truly a war of machines, not merely the fighting machines at the front, but the lathes and drill presses of the factories, the hoes and combines of our farms, the cross-cut saws and peavies in our forests. In total productive capacity America has an immense advantage over every nation in the world. To be effective, that capacity must be geared to war, utilizing every moment of time, every machine, every skill which can be spared from the job of providing for the daily needs of our people, in order to make the tools of war. Nothing short of industrial revolution is required for victory. Our situation is totally different from that in the last World War when we could and did look to France and Britain for the artillery, planes, and tanks we needed. That is not all. The United Nations look to us to provide an increasing amount of their war equipment. Otherwise they cannot cope with the output of Europe's slave labor, working twelve hours a day under the whip of the Axis.

We are undergoing that revolution today. But even as we go through the hardships of this complete transformation of our normal way of life, we have before us the rising curves of our production charts to tell us that the free labor of American democracy is now, as always, more than a match for the unwilling, underfed, half-starved slave labor which bows to the will of a merciless Nazi or Japanese taskmaster. That fact will simplify greatly the final task of knocking out the armed forces of the enemy.

The day of defense is over. From the moment of the first attack on our distant possessions, our task has been altered and enlarged. We must not only defend our shores and peoples; we must carry the attack to the enemy. The work of the past few years has made us impregnable to enemy attack; the work of the days to come will make us invincible in attacking the enemy. Building on a sure foundation, our military effort must take the offensive toward the final achievement of victory which will insure peace in a world of free peoples.

CHAPTER XIV

AMERICA AT WAR

December 8, 1941—

> The people of this country are totally united in their determination to consecrate our material strength and man power to bring conclusively to an end the pestilence of aggression which has long menaced the world and which now has struck deliberately and directly at the safety of the United States.
>
> FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT
> *To Congress,* December 15, 1941

DAWN OF DECEMBER 7, 1941, ended one chapter of American history and opened a new one. Thus far we have read only the first few pages. They make a grim story. The losses suffered, the sacrifices made, the greater losses and sacrifices which we know to be awaiting us, give no cause for rejoicing. In the words of President Roosevelt, addressing the joint session of Congress, December 8: "It will not only be a long war, it will be a hard war. That is the basis on which we now lay all our plans. Production must be not only for our Army and Navy and Air forces. It must reinforce the other armies and navies and air forces fighting the Nazis and the war lords of Japan throughout the Americas and the world. . . ."

America's preparation for war in 1941 was better than that with which she had entered any previous war in her history. In 1775 our forefathers sprang to arms for the defense of their sacred rights, but they remained under arms only as long as it was convenient to them individually. During the seven years of the conflict more than 400,000 men were mobilized for short periods of enlistment; as soon as a man began to be a trained soldier it was time for him to go home. Against this army the British never brought more than 42,000 troops to American soil at any one time. Washington pleaded with Congress in 1778 for a draft; but his pleas were ignored. For seven years, at a cost of $370,000,000, the Americans battled a force one tenth of their number and operating in hostile territory. The war was gallantly fought and bravely won; but preparation both before and during the war was inadequate.

Nine months after the winning of its independence America reduced its army to a strength of sixty-five officers and men. In the succeeding years Indians on the warpath collected many times that number of scalps. Before the end of the century the pirates of the Barbary Coast were exacting an annual tribute and the ransom of captive sailors. Finally America was roused to the spirit expressed by Charles Pinckney in 1798, "Millions for defense, but not one cent for tribute," took the tribute money to build a fleet, and smashed the enemy in their own harbors.

From that victory the Navy declined again, and we entered the War of 1812 with no Army, virtually no Navy, and no equipment. At the beginning of the conflict we outnumbered the British fourteen to one, for they had only 4,500 troops in the whole of North America. At no time was their force greater than 16,500 troops, yet we mobilized half a million men to oppose them. The war dragged on for two years and a half, and our ultimate victory was certainly partially to the credit of Napoleon, who kept the British occupied in Europe.

The Mexican War was begun with an army of eight thousand. By the time a force adequate for victory was put into the field we had spent twenty-two months of time and half a billion dollars. At the end of the war the Army was again reduced to a force only large enough to police the newly won territory, and the Navy fell into complete decay.

The Union Army entered the Civil War with an army of sixteen thousand troops scattered all over the country in units not larger than a regiment. The Union commander at the Battle of Bull Run had never commanded a unit larger than a platoon. Both sides immediately began the preparation of armed forces, and the resources of the North gave her three times as many men and three times as much money. But the war still dragged on for four years. The armies under Grant and Lee, facing each other during the final year of the war, were probably the finest-trained fighting men ever seen in the world; but the cost of that training had been exorbitant. Both sides suffered from the same evils, political control of military policy and strategy, short-term enlistments, elected officers, state-owned militia units; but the South suffered a little less. In the end the South lost because of its lack of facilities behind the lines; the modern war of production was being born.

Fifteen years after the close of the Civil War the president reviewed the American Fleet. Of one hundred and fifty vessels listed, exactly twelve were fit to take post in the line; one of these was the *Constitution,* a relic of the War of 1812! In a day of change to iron and steel, all were wooden vessels, armed with Civil War ordnance. The decay of the great army of Grant was just as complete.

The Spanish-American War really began the modern era of military effort. It was a short war, an *opéra-bouffe* conflict. The army suffered not only from lack of military knowledge and training, but also from confusion in supply and administration and from disease. But the war served to give the final seal to the reunion of our nation and to convince that nation that a peace-time navy was essential for the maintenance of our trade and the protection of our possessions and interests.

At the beginning of the first World War in 1914 we had a Navy, and by 1917 we had spent a few months in expanding the Army. But it was not a modern army equipped to take the field against a modern enemy. Four million men sprang to arms which did not exist in an army which had virtually no developed system of mobilization, and no adequate cadre of trained men to take over the training of new men. But we had learned some lessons from previous experience. We adopted universal conscription for the duration of the conflict; we had all officers appointed by federal authority; we used trained officers to train and lead the new ones; we mobilized industry to support our armed forces. All of this took time; and while we prepared, our Allies held the lines and furnished us with both technicians and equipment until we could produce our own in sufficient quantity. By Armistice Day, 1918, we had the beginnings of an efficient modern army.

Our participation in the second World War has been better. To a certain extent, we have been preparing since 1920. We have been using our industry to supply the United Nations for almost a year. We have been expanding our Army and Navy for an even longer period. The opening of 1942 did not find us completely ready to take the field against the enemy. Our first efforts still had to be mainly defensive. But the base for the launching of the offensive toward victory had been established.

Japan attacked us and then declared war on December 7. Our declaration of war against Japan was given on the following day. On December 11 the United States received a signal honor from the other Axis partners, Germany and Italy. We became the first nation to be given their declaration of war without a previous attack.

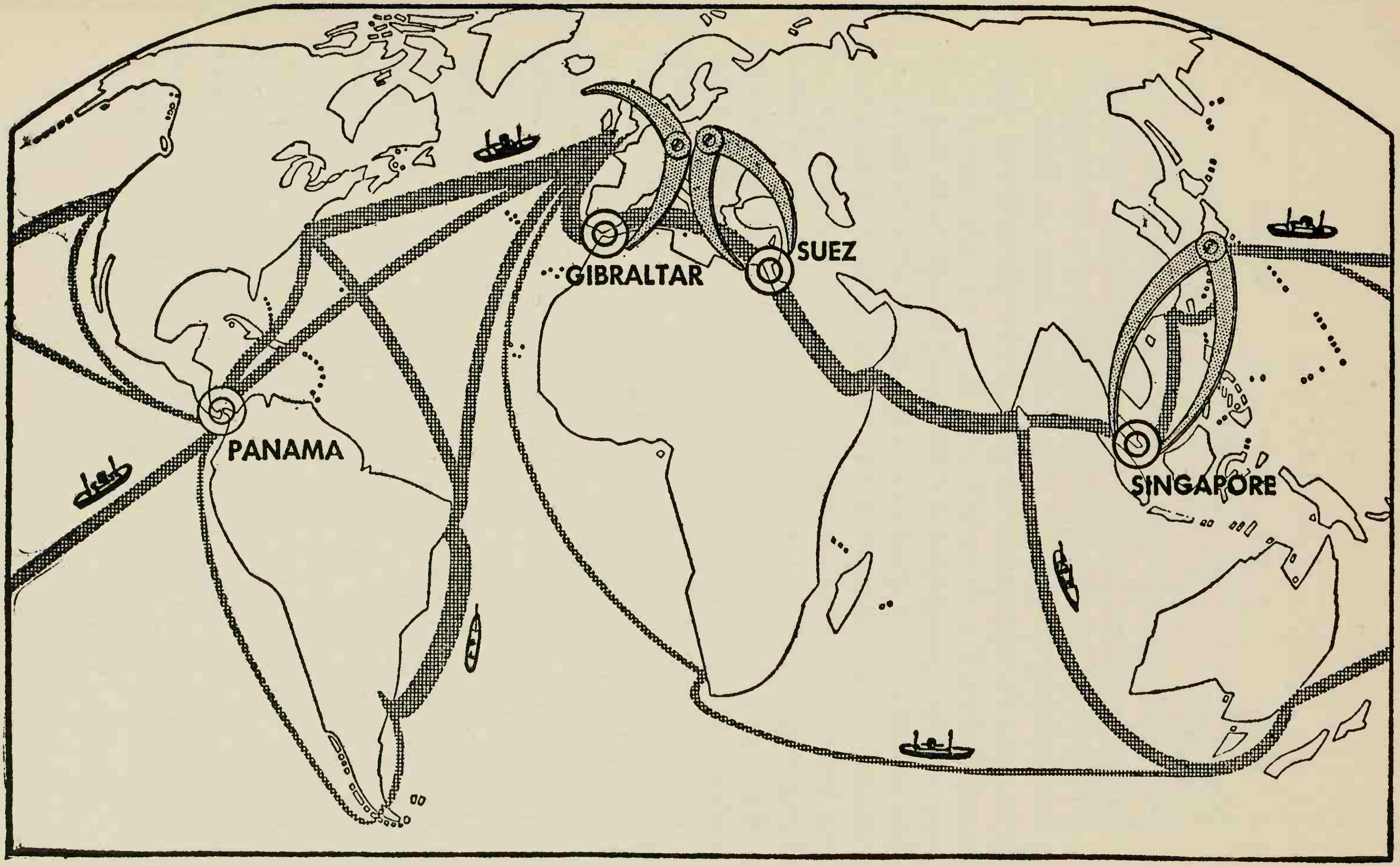
The new chapter of our history is not for the United States alone. No nation can be wholly excluded from its pages. However closely a neutral may hug its neutrality, it is certain to feel an ever-increasing impact of the war on its political and economic life, making it more and more difficult to avoid full involvement in the war. Before December 7, we had grown accustomed to speak of World War II. It became truly a world war when the representatives of twenty-six nations met in Washington, January 2, to unite "in a common struggle against savage and brutal forces seeking to subjugate the world." That declaration, marking the birth of the United Nations, remains open for the future adherence of like-minded peoples to the common cause (*see* Note 19, p. 269).

The strategic problem facing all the belligerents on December 8, 1941, was drastically different from that of two days earlier. The Axis gained enormously in its immediate striking power when Japan threw her full weight into the war, for there was not that problem of the building up of combat potential which faced the

Western Powers. Japan's effort hit its peak from the first day, a peak higher than the Western Powers had estimated it could be. Each substantial gain of territory in southeast Asia and the islands of the South Seas raised Japan's hope that the mineral wealth and other riches of those regions would at last make up for the natural poverty of her own territory. On the other hand, she must hold the territory she seizes, and she must bring its resources back into production promptly, if they are to give her any positive advantage.

Whether or not she got one barrel of Dutch oil or one pound of Malayan rubber or tin, her immediate successes deprived the United Nations of supplies vitally important to their economy. That fact marks a definite, though negative, gain for the Axis. There is further gain when the United Nations are forced to expend in the Far East the military resources—men, ships, equipment, and supplies—which might otherwise be used in some other vital theater of the war.

A third advantage to the Axis nations is the fact that they are now fighting on interior lines throughout the entire world. The drives of both Japan and Germany are made from the center outward. Between Tokyo and Manila lie 2,000 miles; between Tokyo and Singapore, 3,340. By contrast, San Francisco is 7,164 miles from Manila and 7,350 from Singapore. The distances in Europe are shorter, but the advantage rests with Germany. To give effective aid either to Russia or to her own forces in the Near East, Britain must round the Cape of Good Hope; our aid to them must take the same route. The world is now under the threat of two gigantic double pincers with their fulcra in Germany and Japan (*see* Map 40, p. 243).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SINGAPORE
PANAMA

40. THE AXIS PINCERS

By a curious paradox, however, Japan has no interior line connecting her with the western half of the Axis. The long line of water and air communication through Latin America is now closed to the Axis partners. Both ends of the Axis are blockaded. As long as these blockades can be maintained in both Pacific and Atlantic, the Axis will face the problem of constantly diminishing resources unless their interior lines help them to the conquest of new fields, particularly India and Russia.

One disadvantage to the Axis, not to be discounted, is the loss in morale among the peoples of the Axis countries. No campaign of propaganda, nothing except a succession of smashing victories, can lighten the pall which settled on them when they learned that the United States, and to a varying degree the entire Western Hemisphere, was at last arrayed against them. Their fears are heightened by the corresponding rise in morale among the people of the "slave states" occupied by Axis armies.

For the United Nations the advantages gained are largely long-range. They have only begun to develop their fighting resources, both in men and materials; with each passing month they are assured of marshaling materially stronger forces. It is true that Britain, Russia, and China are seriously scarred by the ordeal they have passed through. The British Dominions, however, are relatively fresh; the United States wholly so. The impairment in total and ultimate fighting resources, or combat potential, of the United Nations has suffered to no such extent as that experienced by Japan in her wars since 1931, by Italy since 1935, and by Germany since 1939. The major problem for the United Nations is twofold: to break the offensive power of their common enemies, and to produce the fighting forces necessary for the general offensive which alone will ensure complete victory. Until these forces have been trained and equipped, general strategy must be defensive in character. The United States is undertaking the greatest part of the job of producing the necessary planes, tanks, guns, and ships.

The magnitude of the production job ahead of us was made clear by President Roosevelt in his address to Congress in January 6, 1942. In two years we must produce 185,000 planes, 120,000 tanks, 55,000 antiaircraft guns, and 18,000,000 tons of merchant shipping. Naval vessels, artillery, machine guns, and small arms, and all other material will be produced in proportionate quantities. Much of this output will be turned over to our Allies. No nation in history has ever considered so tremendous an armament program.

Hitler immediately called it "fantastic." His appraisal was fairly answered in the nation's response to the "Produce or Die" address delivered by Donald M. Nelson, head of the War Production Board, on March 10, 1942. Calling on labor and management to abandon "every other consideration except increasing production and increasing it every day," he added the warning, "This is our last chance to show that free economy can survive and be strong." Under that economy America's fighting men are being armed with the best equipment in the world, made by the best workmen in the world.

The program of the Army calls for 3,600,000 trained men in the ranks by the end of 1942. Before December 7 we had already organized four field armies. The air plan calls for doubling the present strength, with the ultimate goal set at two million men, equal to the combined strengths of the R.A.F. and the Luftwaffe. The pool of man power for the expansion of the fighting forces has been set up by the January, 1942, amendment to the Selective Service Act; all men between eighteen and sixty-four years of age have been required to register for all kinds of war work, and those from twenty to forty-four will be available for military service.

Equally impressive is the program of naval expansion. The strength called for in the earlier program was described by the Chairman of the House Naval Committee as "not a two-ocean Navy but one which can defend the interests of the United States in one, two, or three oceans if necessary." That strength is now to be substantially raised in both the sea and air arms, although the details are military secrets. Naval enlistments are being raised to a limit of 500,000, while the Marine Corps is being increased to 104,000, thus assuring the proper manning of our fighting ships. The naval air arm is being raised to an unannounced objective; its magnitude can be estimated from the fact that 30,000 naval air cadets will be trained in 1942.

The task faced by the Navy is well described in the "Report to the Nation" submitted by the Office of Facts and Figures. The report states that "It has the greatest battle of its life on its hands, and it also has a tremendous defensive patrolling job to carry out. The Navy, like the rest of us, is at war with Germany in the Atlantic, with Japan in the Pacific, with Italy in the Mediterranean. At the same time, it must police with Britain the sea lanes from Iceland to the bulge of South America and, with the British, Dutch, and Australian Navies, the vast Pacific as far as Singapore."

The task ahead of our fighting forces is fairly matched by the increasing burden which is now being placed on the nation as a whole. Until the day of final victory, our major industry must be war and production for war. Every employable person, regardless of age or sex, must take part in the job of creating the goods demanded directly or indirectly by war. Every factory and every machine convertible to war uses, every pound of raw material needed for the promised tanks and planes, every kilowatt of energy required in their production must be funneled into the common reservoir of America's power to fight. The normal peacetime requirements of the nation are not being overlooked. The necessities will still be provided; but the luxuries, including many which we had come to consider as necessities, will no longer be available after present inventories are exhausted. "Business as usual," a principle which began to weaken in mid-1941, has vanished. In its place is a growing, nation-wide acceptance of the necessity for sacrifice.

The opening months of America's participation in the second World War constituted a period of defensive action. Japan, attacking on a front from Pearl Harbor to Rangoon, had to be met on that same wide front. Where Japan was hundreds of miles from its bases, the United States had to move its fighting forces thousands of miles. Time was desperately needed to permit the marshaling of sufficient American and British Empire forces to reinforce the Dutch, Chinese, and other native forces opposing Japan. Fully aware of the importance of the time factor, Japan showed herself willing to suffer any losses, however terrific, in her determination to reduce each successive bastion of the United Nations standing in the way of Japan's complete mastery of the Western Pacific. The suicides of two Japanese generals after their troops had failed to seize their objectives, Suzuki at Changsha and Homma at Bataan, fairly indicate Japan's desperate haste and need.

Always greatly superior in numbers at the critical points, the Japanese gained several of their objectives with relative ease. Others were secured at terrific cost, not only in men, but in equipment. Before the Battle of the Java Sea, Japan's shipping losses, naval and commercial, had already reached a total which two years of peak production by the Japanese shipyards could not hope to replace.

It is noteworthy that at every point where the Japanese encountered American forces—by land, sea, or air—their losses far outweighed those of the defenders. The small marine garrison on Wake Island sank seven Japanese naval vessels before they were finally overpowered. General MacArthur's forces on the Bataan Peninsula defied all Japanese attacks for months. In combination with other United Nations forces the American contingents have been no less successful. Flying with the R.A.F. in Burma, American airmen had bagged not less than 125 Japanese planes by mid-February. In the five-day running battle of Macassar Straits, American naval and air units co-operated with the Dutch to destroy more than forty vessels of a Japanese armada. The marines on Wake, the flyers at Rangoon, the soldiers on Bataan, the sailors in the Macassar Straits have traced the handwriting on Japan's wall.

With these collective exploits will long be remembered those of individuals—of Captain Colin Kelly, who gave his life in sinking the battleship *Haruna*—of

Second Lieutenant Alexander R. Nininger, who died on Bataan after cleaning out an enemy position single-handed (*see* Note 20, p. 270). When the full story of the Far Eastern campaign is written, it will be a proud chapter in the history of America.

In these actions of the men engaged in the fighting there are both lessons and tributes for the whole of America. There is something more than courage at a moment of crisis, more than perfect leadership against overwhelming odds, more than willingness to die for an ideal. Courage and daring are high-lighted; they catch the eye and capture the imagination. But beyond them there is the skill, both of the soldier and of the worker, that makes both courage and daring possible in modern mechanized warfare.

Behind the moment when the pulling of the bomb release in Captain Kelly's plane loosed destruction on an enemy warship, lay months of steady training. Every man in the crew had been schooled in the performance of his exact job in reaching that objective. Behind them lay the work of the ground crew which had the plane in perfect condition for its taking off. Behind them lay the men of the Air Corps who tested and accepted the plane from the factory. Behind them lay the thousands of workers who made the separate parts of the plane and those who assembled them. Failure of one man at any point along that line would have meant failure of the entire mission. Captain Kelly sank the *Haruna;* but an unknown rivet maker in an unknown factory also had his part in that achievement.

The Battle of Bataan tells the same story. It takes more than courage, more than superb leadership to meet a foe like the Japanese at odds of ten to one, to beat off attack after attack, while inflicting such losses as the Japanese have suffered. Training developed the skill which cut down the attackers until their losses stopped them in their tracks. It was not merely the training of the man who pulls a trigger, throws a grenade, or sends a shell on its way. It was the training of the thousands of others behind him. The man at the wheel of the ammunition truck, hauling his load over dirt roads in a black-out; the signalmen keeping wire and radio communications open under fire, without even a chance to shoot back; the kitchen details getting food to the firing line; all these, down to the last man, made possible the epic campaign of Bataan Peninsula. Their courage and valor have made an unforgettable record. Without their skill, a skill which comes only from training; without their closely knitted team work, that record would have been closed soon after the Japanese landed in force.

A man of courage, skilled in the duties of a soldier, knowing everything he should know about his task and those of the men with whom he works, may still prove to be a very poor soldier. One more qualification must be added before we can properly call him a soldier. That quality is discipline. Like skill, it is the product of training. Where it exists, the troop leader, from corporal to commander in chief, knows that he can count on the immediate, willing, and full execution of the orders issued. He also knows that in situations where orders have not and cannot be issued, every soldier will take the initiative and act as he believes orders would have directed him to act. Where discipline is weak, uncertainty and doubt pave the road to defeat. Where it is seriously lacking, an army is no more than a uniformed mob.

It is a shock to our enemies to discover that the man-hood of a democratic people can fight as only, in their belief, the soldiers of a dictator state can fight. For sixteen years Nazi propaganda has pictured democracy as a "mob, a rotten mob, without a soul." If Hitler had been correct, the war would be over; we would now be his slaves. Though the Nazi leaders may believe it still, the theme of democratic weakness is dropped from their broadcasts; their soldiers know otherwise. In its place is one which speaks of the strength of the enemies of the Axis, of the need of mobilizing every energy to avert the destruction which otherwise must be the fate of the Axis.

For our own part, we have learned again some things which we had forgotten, others which for a while we refused to believe. We no longer deceive ourselves about the strength of our enemies nor about their weaknesses. We know that our fighting tools—tanks and planes and ships—are a fair match for anything our enemies can offer. We know that the men who made them and the men who use them can withstand any shock, any early defeats, so long as America continues to mobilize behind them the men and means to ensure victory.

We know, finally, what it takes to make a soldier, a regiment, an army. We know that for the individual fighting man there must be long hours of training to develop the skills, to build the combat teams, to weld these into armies. We know that behind every individual soldier there stand nineteen American citizens who will do their part in keeping him supplied with the tools he needs. In our nation, mobilized for war, there are only fighters—on the battle line, on the supply line, on the production line, and behind the production line. Our war effort is a team made up of teams; let one weakling fail, and a mission fails. But the spirit of freedom fosters neither weaklings nor failure.

The men of Bataan and Rangoon, of Wake and Macassar and Java Sea have fought with the fighting spirit of free men. They have kept clean the record of their country, a record never marred by defeat in a foreign war. They have kept faith with those who maintained them on the front line. They have given protection to the nation. That, in the day of our greatest danger, is the role of the American soldier.

NOTES

Chapter I

1. (Page 9)

The concept and working principles of German militarism go back to Frederick William I, King of Prussia from 1713 until 1740. Nazi writers refer to him as the "Potsdam Fuehrer." His genius son, Frederick the Great, was given the credit for making these principles work in international relations. Actually, both owe a debt to Wallenstein, Tilly, Machiavelli, Genghis Khan, and the Neanderthal Man. Inherent in the Prussian theory of international relations is the idea that justice, promises, and treaties are merely the seasoning of the dish, to be varied to taste, as far as Germany is concerned. It gains added strength from the fact that Germany's potential victims can be expected to keep their word. Ludendorff and his associates were heirs of the tradition of Prussian militarism. Hitler learned from them. Contrary to popular conception, he is their creature, not their creator. But the circumstances of fate, aided by his own ruthlessness, enabled him to reverse the situation and to make himself master and Fuehrer over all.

Chapter II

2. (Page 27)

During the Spanish Civil War the "fifth column" in Madrid was composed of Fascist sympathizers among the Loyalist forces. While the four columns attacked the city from outside, these sympathizers worked inside the city to break up the morale of the defenders, to spread dissenion, to disrupt communications, and to do anything else which might bring about the fall of Madrid.

The Germans had already been using the fifth column technique for some time. When the agitation for the return of German minorities to the Reich was begun, the Nazi parties in the countries having these minorities were already active workers for the enemy without. Their constant agitation brought on one domestic crisis after another at times when the total effort of the government was required for the settlement of international problems. This fifth column found its greatest field of activity among the mass of the population who are easily swayed from one point of view to another. Thus, at a time when the whole nation should stand united, there was a mass of wavering individuals who had been persuaded that their ultimate good lay in disunity.

The fifth column's work in campaign is much the same as that of an espionage system. Operating behind the lines, it gathers information about troop movements for transmission to its own army, it disrupts communications wherever possible, and it is responsible for a thousand petty annoyances which divert defense effort from total bearing on the main attack. The advantage of the fifth column over the espionage system is that the members of the fifth column are natives of the locality rather than agents sent into it for specific missions.

Now that the term has become so common, "fifth columnist" has become a label to paste on anyone who does not agree with the majority point of view. Many leading isolationists were branded as fifth columnists during the debate on the Lend-Lease Bill. This in itself is an example of fifth column activity, since the resultant dissension and disunity is a goal of the Nazi fifth column in America.

Chapter IV

3. (Page 60)

When Germany invaded the Rhineland in March, 1936, Belgium joined Great Britain, France, and Italy in denouncing that violation of the Locarno pact. In the Parliamentary elections of May the Belgian edition of the Nazi party, the Rexists, won twenty-one seats. Led by Leon Degrelle, the Rexists agitated for a more conciliatory attitude toward Germany. On October 14, Belgium took an obvious step in that effort by denouncing her military alliance with France, thus resuming liberty of action in any conflict between France and Germany.

Chapter V

4. (Page 80)

The following were the principal planes used by the Royal Air Force and the German Luftwaffe in the Battle of Britain:

Royal Air Force

Fighters

1. Spitfire—A single-seater with a Rolls-Royce Merlin motor. Maximum speed: 367 M.P.H. Armament: 8 Browning machine guns (four in each wing).
2. Hawker Hurricane—A single-seater with a Rolls-Royce Merlin motor. Maximum speed: 335 M.P.H. Armament: 3 Browning machine guns (four in each wing).
3. Boulton-Paul Defiant—A two-seater with a Rolls-Royce Merlin motor. Maximum speed: secret. Armament: 4 Browning machine guns; one electrically operated gun turret on top of the fuselage. (Used extensively as a night fighter.)

German Luftwaffe

Fighters

1. Messerschmitt 109—A single-seater with a Daimler-Benz motor. Maximum speed: 354 M.P.H. Armament: 6 machine guns; one cannon.
2. Messerschmitt 110—A two-seater with two Daimler-Benz motors. Maximum speed: 365 M.P.H. Armament: 4 machine guns; two cannons.

Bombers

1. Junkers 87-B—Two-seated dive-bomber with one Junkers liquid-cooled motor. Maximum speed: 242 M.P.H. Armament: 2 fixed machine guns (in wings); one movable machine gun (in aft cockpit).
2. Junkers 88-A1—Long-range dive-bomber with two Junkers motors. Maximum speed: 317 M.P.H. Armament: 6 movable machine guns.
3. Heinkel 11A—Long-range bomber with two Daimler-Benz motors. Maximum speed: 252 M.P.H. Armament: 3 movable machine guns.

4. Heinkel Va—Long-range bomber with two Junkers motors. Maximum speed: 274 M.P.H. Armament: 3 movable machine guns.
5. Dornier 17—Reconnaissance bomber with two Daimler-Benz motors. Maximum speed: 298 M.P.H. Armament: 3 fixed machine guns.
6. Dornier 215—Long-range reconnaissance bomber with two Daimler-Benz motors. Maximum speed: 312 M.P.H. Armament: 3 movable machine guns.
7. Messerschmitt Jaguar—High-speed reconnaissance bomber with two Mercedes-Benz motors. Maximum speed: secret (probably about 320 M.P.H.). Armament: 4 fixed machine guns (under center section); one movable machine gun (in aft cockpit); one movable cannon.

5. (Page 90)

The eight British bases leased to the United States in exchange for the overage destroyers range in a flat arc from Newfoundland to South America. In the North Atlantic there is Placentia Harbor, Newfoundland. Off the eastern coast of the United States are Bermuda, and Mayaguana, Bahaman Islands. In the Caribbean are Kingston, Jamaica, and the islands of Antigua, St. Lucia, and Trinidad. On the mainland of South America is Georgetown, British Guiana.

Chapter VI

6. (Page 95)

During the German submarine campaign the successful supplying of the British Isles from overseas is the result of the convoy system worked out by the British Navy during the first World War. Ships from one general area are gathered in a secret rendezvous and then escorted through the danger zones by naval units, usually destroyers or corvettes. These are specially equipped for making war on U-boats and planes alike.

The great disadvantage of the convoy system is the fact that the entire convoy has to move at the rate of the slowest vessel in it. Another disadvantage is the fact that many independent ship masters refuse to obey all of the regulations of the convoy. In one instance the captain of a ship endangered the whole convoy by his refusal to douse his running lights; the commander of the convoy finally had to open fire with a machine gun before he was able to persuade the captain to abide by regulations.

The Germans have devised a new technique of attack to get through the protection offered by convoys. In the first World War the submarines operated singly; thus they could be easily beaten off. In this war they have begun to operate in groups, in "wolf packs." One submarine will show itself on one side of the convoy and draw off the escort vessels. The other submarines in the pack will then attack the convoy from the opposite side. These tactics require perfect co-ordination and some advance information about the route of the convoy. The British have already devised tactics to meet the wolf-pack technique.

Although a shallow draft vessel is hard on individuals subject to seasickness, it is admirably adapted to convoy duty. One of these vessels on convoy duty was the target of three torpedoes fired at once; one went wide and the other two, perfectly aimed, passed under the ship.

Great credit must be given the sailors on both the ships of the convoy and the escort vessels. They are on the alert against submarine and air attacks for twenty-four hours in the day. They live in cramped quarters and have relatively short periods ashore. The North Atlantic in the winter months is one of the wildest seas on the globe. But even through hardship and danger, these crews carry on.

7. (Page 97)

With reference to the *Graf von Spee's* fate, a rumor—though never verified—persisted that Great Britain, through its Intelligence Service, had acquired secret possession of German naval and consular code books. The British Admiralty thus was enabled to transmit to the commanding officer of the crippled vessel, at refuge in Montevideo harbor, a fabricated order to scuttle his ship if forced under international neutrality law to take to the open sea before adequately repaired. Thus the *Graf von Spee* was sent to the bottom without further engagement with the three British cruisers which had so badly damaged her and which were now waiting outside Uruguayan waters ready to administer the coup de grace.

Report of the fabricated order to scuttle recalls a 1914 incident when the German admiral, for whom the *Graf von Spee* was named, suffered from similar resourcefulness of the British Admiralty. Declaration of war in August, 1914, found Admiral Graf von Spee and his cruiser squadron in the Pacific. On November 1, he encountered an inferior British cruiser force commanded by Admiral Sir Christopher Craddock off Coronel, Chile, sinking all of the latter except one light but speedy cruiser. The German squadron outgunned and outspeeded all save the vessel which escaped.

Following this disaster, the British Admiralty dispatched to the South Atlantic a squadron of heavily armed cruisers under Admiral Sturdee. According to instructions, this force lay off the Falkland Islands and awaited developments. With the aid of the German Imperial Navy code book, which had come into the Admiralty's possession, von Spee and his squadron were lured to rendezvous at the Falklands. There the heavier, better-armed, and speedier British craft took the German by surprise and disposed of his force as von Spee had disposed of Craddock's squadron a few weeks before. Admiral von Spee went down aboard his flagship, the *Scharnhorst.*

8. (Page 99)

The magnetic mine was a German weapon which accounted for a great deal of destruction in the first months of the war. This mine is detonated by a device which is activated by magnetic attraction to the metal hull of a vessel. The advantage of the magnetic mine lay in the fact that contact was not necessary for detonation; hence, they would catch ships of varying draft. The British conquered this problem by means of a system of cables running the full length of the ship. This device, called the "degaussing apparatus," neutralizes the magnetic attraction of the metal hull. The British went after the mines themselves with wooden-hulled mine sweepers.

9. (Page 101)

The appearance of oil on the surface after the explosion of a depth charge does not necessarily mean that the submarine has been destroyed. The explosion might rupture the portion of the outer hull where the fuel is stored and thus produce an oil slick. Or the crew of the submarine might themselves release a quantity of oil when they feel a depth charge close to them. It was reported that the crew of one submarine even loosed some chairs and other equipment through the escape hatch in order to convince the hunting destroyer that they were finished. The destroyer chalked up another submarine to its credit, and the U-boat went on raiding. During the first World War a depth bomb ripped the conning tower from a U-boat; it came to the surface with two men still in it. After the war it was discovered that the submarine had managed to limp back to port and repairs.

10. (Page 106)

"Freedom of the seas," as a principle of international relations, has long been a battlefield of the international lawyers. Generally speaking, its interpretation by individual countries has been determined by their immediate interests and desires and by the strength of their navies rather than by universally accepted principles of international law. The United States has insisted throughout on the right to ship its merchandise (other than contraband of war) in American bottoms to any port not closed by effective blockade. At the same time, it has acknowledged the right of a belligerent to halt and search American merchant ships on the high seas and to seize both cargo and ship for action by a private court if contraband of war is discovered. Difficulty has frequently arisen over disagreements as to what constitutes "contraband of war." Another sore point has been the question as to when a blockade is or is not effective.

In neither World War has the United States accepted as valid the blockade declared by the Axis against Britain and other anti-Axis Powers, a blockade depending on submarine and aerial warfare for its maintenance. Moreover, the United States has vigorously opposed and countered Germany's self-assumed right to extend the right of search and seizure by sinking, without warning, our merchantmen on the high seas.

The Neutrality Act specifically disclaims any renunciation by the United States of its rights under international law. Nevertheless, its net effect, closing the war zones to American shipping, was equivalent to the *de facto* abrogation of those rights.

Chapter VII

11. (Page 116)

The following account taken from a personal letter of a twenty-two-year-old English officer in a British armored regiment in the Near East may prove useful in indicating the type of desert fighting which takes place in that area. The account refers to a portion of General Wavell's offensive in December, 1940. It has not been authenticated by any corroborating reports from other members of the same unit:

> We went through the whole campaign from Sidi Barrani to Bengazi and we were first across the road south of Bengazi, and you may rest assured that whatever else may happen we are always first, and if anyone else looks like getting in front we double our speed! We were round by the sea and at the back of Barrani before it was attacked and when the Italians started to bolt we wiped out about 1,000. After this we beat it for the frontier as hard as we could go and attacked Sidi Omar single handed, charging it in true cavalry style, crushing many Italians under the tracks, collecting 1,000 prisoners and about 600 killed, and an Italian bomber which took off with their general we shot down. We then sat at the back of Bardia while it was being besieged and it was there we had "Black Saturday" when the regiment was bombed 36 times during the day and machine-gunned by fighters 14 times. I don't think any of us will ever forget it, yet not one single person was hurt nor any damage whatever done, which really is incredible.
>
> Bardia fell and we beat it for Tobruk where we tapped in on the defenses to gain information and had rather an unpleasant time for shells. While we waited for it to fall we had some very amusing shooting after gazelle and bustard, which made a magnificent change of diet, and we collected a nice bit of Chianti too, of which I'm exceptionally fond. Tobruk eventually went and off we went again to a fort called Mecheli, which is surrounded by hills and very difficult indeed to attack, and it was there I got blown up on a mine so I hate the sight of the place. We had a very stiff battle on our own, being surprised owing to the appalling

ground by much bigger tanks than ours, and we had a tough struggle to get out but made it in the end, putting six of their tanks out of action without much loss to ourselves. But as usual, for reasons best known to themselves, the Italians bolted from a place they could have held for a long time at great inconvenience to us.

After Mecheli we did our historic march going 125 miles in 24 hours and arriving on the Bengazi-Tripoli road exactly at the moment the head of the fleeing Italian army appeared coming down it, and battle royal ensued. We crashed through their vast column which was roughly 30 miles long, and when we got through it we turned round and crashed back again, and then went on crashing indefinitely. We started on this at 4:30 in the afternoon and in the setting sun it was truly a prolific spectacle, shambles isn't the word: yells, screams, shells, fires, and men going over like ninepins, went to make up the scene, and by the light of some petrol lorries we had set on fire we fought after dark till the fires went out; and just after light we started again. They had 127 heavy tanks to 46 of ours all told. At one period 5 of our tanks destroyed 47 of theirs in 20 minutes which we considered very good shooting. Twice we ran out of ammunition and had to withdraw to refill, and once they nearly got through, only nearly, but it was a bad moment as they had 52 tanks left, and owing to temporary mechanical breakdowns and tanks put out of action, we only had 8 tanks to fight them within our entire force. But thanks to simply amazing feats of skill and daring, and to the wonderful show put up by the men firing the guns in our tanks, we held them off till tank drivers working like demons possessed under fire, got their tanks patched up and roared into the fray once more to help us. And so by the end of that day we had won a battle against terrific odds, and in the setting sun we looked upon a scene so different from the day before, a mass of wrecked tanks, lorries and guns, the ground pitted with shell holes, fires still burning, the whole area covered with dead and wounded—a really deplorable sight.

The next day we completed mopping-up operations and finally watched the streams of wretched prisoners coming in —in fact, a picture of Italy being forced to eat the mud she had flung, and I don't think they cared much about the taste!

Chapter X

12. (Page 165)

Japanese extremists have always resorted to assassination as a political principle. Aided and abetted by the radicals in the army and navy, they have not hesitated to wipe out the highest officials in the government, even cabinet members and premiers, as well as party leaders and leading business men. Anyone opposing the extreme militaristic policy was open to political murder. In most instances the assassins surrendered themselves to the civil authorities and were acquitted by the civil courts on the ground that their murders were motivated by patriotism.

13. (Page 166)

One of the first expressions of the Messianic complex of the Japanese, as well as one of the first expressions of Japanese imperialism, was made in 1858 when Japan was being opened to commercial and diplomatic relations with the Western world. In that year one of the Japanese peers, Lord Hotta, advised his emperor:

> Among the rulers of the world at present there is none so noble and illustrious as to command universal vassalage, or who can make his virtuous influence felt throughout the length and breadth of the whole world. To have such a Ruler over the whole world is doubtless in conformity with the Will of Heaven. Thus our treaty and other relations should be established with other nations, always with the object in view of laying a foundation for securing the hegemony over all nations. When our power and national standing have come to be recognized, we should take the lead in punishing the nations which may act contrary to the principle of international interests; and in so doing, we should join hands with the nations whose principles may be found identical with those of our country . . . Such a policy could be nothing else but enforcement of the power and authority deputed (to us) by the Spirit of Heaven. Our national prestige and position thus ensured, the nations of the world will come to look up to our Emperor as the Great Ruler of all nations, and they will come to follow our policy and submit themselves to our judgment.

This view has often been repeated by the expressions of Japanese foreign policy. The "Tanaka Memorial" is really only a modernization of Hotta's opinion.

14. (Page 172)

From the beginning of Japan's move into Asia, hundreds of American citizens petitioned the government to declare an embargo on trade with Japan, particularly on our shipments of scrap iron and oil. Many of our leaders opposed such action, holding that it would be tantamount to a declaration of war. When the United States began official aid to China in the form of huge loans, our position became extremely equivocal. That we could supply Japan with war materials with one hand while giving money to China with the other was completely incomprehensible to the Chinese.

Individual citizens, however, conducted individual boycotts, which, while ineffective in the larger picture, were indicative of the sympathies of our people. There is the example of one woman in 1938 who refused to wear silk stockings, drink Rhine wine, or use olive oil in her cooking. It is now clear that if this type of action had been made official, the drives of the Axis nations might have been checked at the outset.

Chapter XI

15. (Page 203)

According to reports, the landing operations which are the initial stage of Japanese invasion tactics on the several Pacific fronts follow a pattern developed in peacetime tactical training, repeatedly rehearsed and tested under service conditions ever since the attack on China in July, 1937. Reconnaissance of landing beaches, by air or through secret agents or both, is the first step. Troops assigned to effect the landings are thoroughly trained to their tasks in advance.

On the night immediately preceding a landing operation, troop transports, landing-boat carriers, and naval convoy units effect a rendezvous at a designated anchorage. If a suitable anchorage is not available, the vessels are timed to arrive off the beach objective between midnight and dawn. Landings are usually staged to take place just before dawn on days when high tide comes immediately after sunrise. When possible, periods of rain or stormy weather are selected in order to increase the element of surprise. Transfer of the landing forces from transports and landing-craft carriers is effected as close to the beach as is possible in the circumstances.

In all of their operations in China, the Japanese have had overwhelming air and naval superiority. On one occasion, Japanese destroyers assisted the landing forces by preliminary bombardment of defense positions at a range of about thirteen hundred yards, and by "howitzer" fire directed at special areas. The latter was achieved by putting extreme elevation on the ships' guns and using a reduced charge.

Through side hatches in the Japanese landing-craft carrier, landing craft loaded with full complements of men and materiel are slid into the sea. Somewhat similar in construction to a whaling depot ship, the carrier is of special transport design. The landing craft are of several types. Type A has been described by observers as a large open boat, with a landing ram on the bow which flaps forward onto the sand, enabling guns to be wheeled off. The engine and the coxswain are usually protected by bulletproof plating. Twin keels provide stability after grounding. This type of boat, which is used by the main landing force, has an estimated capacity of 110 to 120 men, fully equipped. It is powered by a two-cylinder gasoline engine and has a speed of approximately ten knots; a few boats are powered by Diesel engines. Their over-all length is about fifty feet, with the beam measurement about thirteen feet. The loaded mean draft is something over three feet.

Type B is a small open boat, holding from fifty to sixty men, with a speed from eight to ten knots. It is similar in construction to a steamer lifeboat and has a draft of thirty inches when fully loaded. Some boats of this class are equipped with a bulletproof shield in the bow; others are known to carry a light machine gun in the bow.

Type C is an armored motor launch used for close support work, reconnaissance, and maintenance of communications. It has an over-all length of about forty feet, with a beam span of about thirteen feet. One boat of this type was clocked at fifteen knots. It carries an antiaircraft machine gun, and two other machine guns or one-pounders.

Type D is constructed solely as a tow boat; it is used to supplement the large open boat of Type A. It has a wooden hull, similar to a standard motor launch, and its over-all length is approximately thirty feet with a beam of ten feet.

Type E, for use in shallow water or in creeks, smaller tributaries, and weed-bound water is driven by an airplane propeller. These boats are approximately fifty feet in length, not more than ten feet at the beam. Judging by the bow spray in a photograph of one taken as it headed down a river, about ten feet of the forward underwater body rose above water. The draft at light load appeared to be not more than two feet. She was steered from under the canopy forward. In the bow was a shield for a machine gun.

Constructed of steel plates, Type F is in two sizes, thirty feet and forty feet over-all, with twelve-foot beam. Its hull is of steel plates with a metal shield rigged in the bow for protection. In this shield there is an aperture for a machine gun. One of the forty-foot craft was clocked at nine knots.

In the Philippines, typical Japanese landing operations appear to cover about five miles of beach. A line of destroyers stands about a half mile offshore, with a heavy cruiser or battleship about three and one half miles beyond. Two groups of transports remain between the destroyers and the heavy vessel, and an aircraft carrier lies between the two groups of transports. About fifty barges with a capacity of 150 men each head for shore, each barge being armed with two or three machine guns. The naval craft are in position to fire upon the beaches; they can also deliver effective antiaircraft fire of considerable concentration up to about 3,500 feet. Machine gunning, observation, and pursuit protection are provided by aircraft carriers and landing fields already established.

The V-front light tank which is used by the Japanese in landing operations fires armor-piercing ammunition from .50 caliber machine guns. Direct hits from 37-mm. guns are deflected by the sloping front of this tank.

Close liaison between Japanese air forces and ground troops is maintained by portable radios. These are equipped with earphones, and are carried on the chest by commanding officers of companies. With air superiority, the Japanese are able to observe the positions of the Allied front lines and troop dispositions and movements. This information is then relayed to the Japanese commanders, who are told when to move forward and when to halt.

Japanese infantry, armed with grenades and automatic weapons, have obtained great mobility by leaving behind all other equipment not absolutely necessary. Their attacks usually are made at daybreak. Company commanders move up their companies by squads, and consolidate them with advance security detachments prior to the attack.

In Malaya, heavy motor vehicles have been used sparingly, for in the low and soggy terrain they tend to become immobilized on any road that is not hard-surfaced. The Japanese have equipped and trained their soldiers operating in Malaya to travel for days through jungles with all their supplies either in their packs or on small transport vehicles. Three types of machine guns have been reported in use by the Japanese in the Malayan campaign, a Thompson-type submachine gun, a type "96" light machine gun, and a belt-fed medium machine gun. This last, mounted on a wheeled carriage pulled by truck, resembles the British Vickers gun except that the Japanese weapon has a larger water jacket.

Chapter XII

16. (Page 216)

From such census statistics as are available, it appears that more than two million Axis nationals are living in Latin America, distributed by nationality as follows:

Germans	171,783
Italians	1,920,042
Japanese	177,146
Total	2,268,971

By country, the distribution is as follows:

	Germans	*Italians*	*Japanese*
Argentina	59,415	780,000	2,600
Bolivia	13,000	500	200
Brazil	40-50,000	1,000,000	145,000
Chile	20,000	12,000	900
Columbia	2,977	1,440	206
Costa Rica	1,000	6,800	42
Cuba	3,044	1,302	769
Dominican Republic	139	350	5
Ecuador	1,173	626	16

	German	*Italian*	*Japanese*
Guatemala	3,500	420	2
Haiti ..	355	75	0
Honduras	443	199	1
Mexico	6,501	6,908	4,310
Nicaragua	151	65	1
Panama	175	600	300
Paraguay	10,000	5,600	25
Peru	2,122	7,618	22,728
Salvador	290	239	1
Uruguay	6,000	100,000	20
Venezuela	3,000	1,500	20
Total	173,285-183,285	1,920,242	177,146

In addition to the above, 7,062,324 individuals resident in Latin America retain ties of varying strength to one or another of the three Axis Powers. Some of these are naturalized citizens; others are first-generation descendents of Axis nationals.

Country	*Germans*	*Italians*	*Japanese*
Argentina	42,000	4,000,000	6,100
Bolivia	5,000	—	500
Brazil	1,000,000	1,500,000	200,000
Chile	150,000	11,070	—
Columbia	4,113	1,572	159
Costa Rica	3-4,000	—	50
Cuba	5,000	1,370	770
Dominican Republic	—	—	—
Ecuador	2,193	7,000	594
Guatemala	2,200	—	—
Haiti	—	—	—
Honduras	510	199	2
Mexico	10,000	4,900	18,000
Nicaragua	—	—	—
Panama	1,000	760	358
Paraguay	35,000	—	484
Peru	1,913	3,942	30,000
Salvador	175	284	7
Uruguay	6-7,000	—	74
Venezuela	3-4,000	—	25
Totals	1,274,104	5,531,097	257,123

Chapter XIII

17. (Page 229)

Distances between points of strategic importance in connection with the possibility of an Axis invasion of the Western Hemisphere over the South Atlantic route are as follows:

New York to Natal	4,040 miles
Dakar to Natal	1,870 miles
Azores to Natal	3,090 miles
New York to Cólon, Panama........	2,200 miles
Port of Spain, Trinidad to Recife (Pernambuco)	2,230 miles
New York to Buenos Aires..........	5,330 miles
Dakar to Buenos Aires	4,340 miles

18. (Page 232)

The comparative strengths of the land and air forces of the nations now fighting are (figures as of November 1, 1941):

Axis	*Army*	*Air Force*	*Total*
Germany	8,000,000	1,000,000*	9,000,000†
Italy	4,200,000	363,033	4,563,033†
Japan	3,217,500	(51,500)	3,217,500‡
Total	15,417,500	1,414,533	16,832,033

* Includes AA units.
† Separate Air Force.
‡ Air Force in Army.

(These totals are raised by the varying and undetermined numbers of troops drawn by the Axis from its various satellites.)

United Nations	*Army*	*Air Force*	*Total*
British Empire	?	?	4,000,000
United States	?	?	1,600,000
U. S. S. R.	17,000,000	(150,000)	17,000,000
China	2,910,000	(16,901)	2,901,000
Dutch E. Indies..........	?	?	?
Total			25,510,000

The naval strengths are (figures as of December 6, 1941):

Axis	*Capital*	*Cruisers*	*Destroyers*	*Submarines*	*Carriers*
Germany	3	4 Heavy 4 Light	50	150	1
Italy	5	3 Heavy 10 Light	72 5 Monitors	60	0
Japan	11	18 Heavy	130	73	10*
(France)	5	4 Heavy	53	61	2

* Plus probably 5 converted merchantmen with capacity of about 40 planes each.

United Nations	*Capital*	*Cruisers*	*Destroyers*	*Submarines*	*Carriers*
Great Britain	13(5)*	66(15)*	245(64)*	77(8)*	8(5)*
Dutch E. Indies...	0	4 Light	6	15	0
U. S. S. R.	3	7	46?	265	1
United States† ...	17	37	171	113	7
(Under constr.).	15	54	193	73	11

* Figures in parentheses denote ships under repair; they are included in totals.

† Figures from "Report to the Nation," OFF, January 14, 1942.

Chapter XIV

19. (Page 241)

The text of the allied joint agreement issued January 2:

Declaration by United Nations:

A joint declaration by the United Nations was signed by the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, China, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, India, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Panama, Poland, South Africa, Yugoslavia.

The governments signatory hereto,

Having subscribed to a common program of purposes and principles embodied in the joint declaration of the President of the United States of America and the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland dated August 14, 1941, known as the Atlantic Charter, being convinced that complete victory over their enemies is essential to defend life, liberty, independence and religious freedom, and to preserve human rights and justice in their own lands as well as in other lands, and that they are now engaged in a common struggle against savage and brutal forces seeking to subjugate the world declare:

(1) Each government pledges itself to employ its full resources, military or economic, against those members of the Tri-partite Pact and its adherents with which such government is at war.

(2) Each government pledges itself to co-operate with the governments signatory hereto and not to make a separate armistice or peace with the enemies.

20. (Page 249)

The citation for Lieutenant Nininger:

Enemy snipers in trees and fox holes had stopped counter-attack to regain part of position. In hand-to-hand fighting which followed, Lieut. Nininger repeatedly forced his way to and into the hostile position. Though exposed to heavy enemy fire, he continued to attack with rifle and hand grenades and succeeded in destroying several enemy groups in fox holes, and enemy snipers.

Although wounded three times, he continued his attacks until he was killed after pushing alone far within the enemy position. When his body was found after recapture of the position, one enemy officer and two enemy soldiers lay dead around him.

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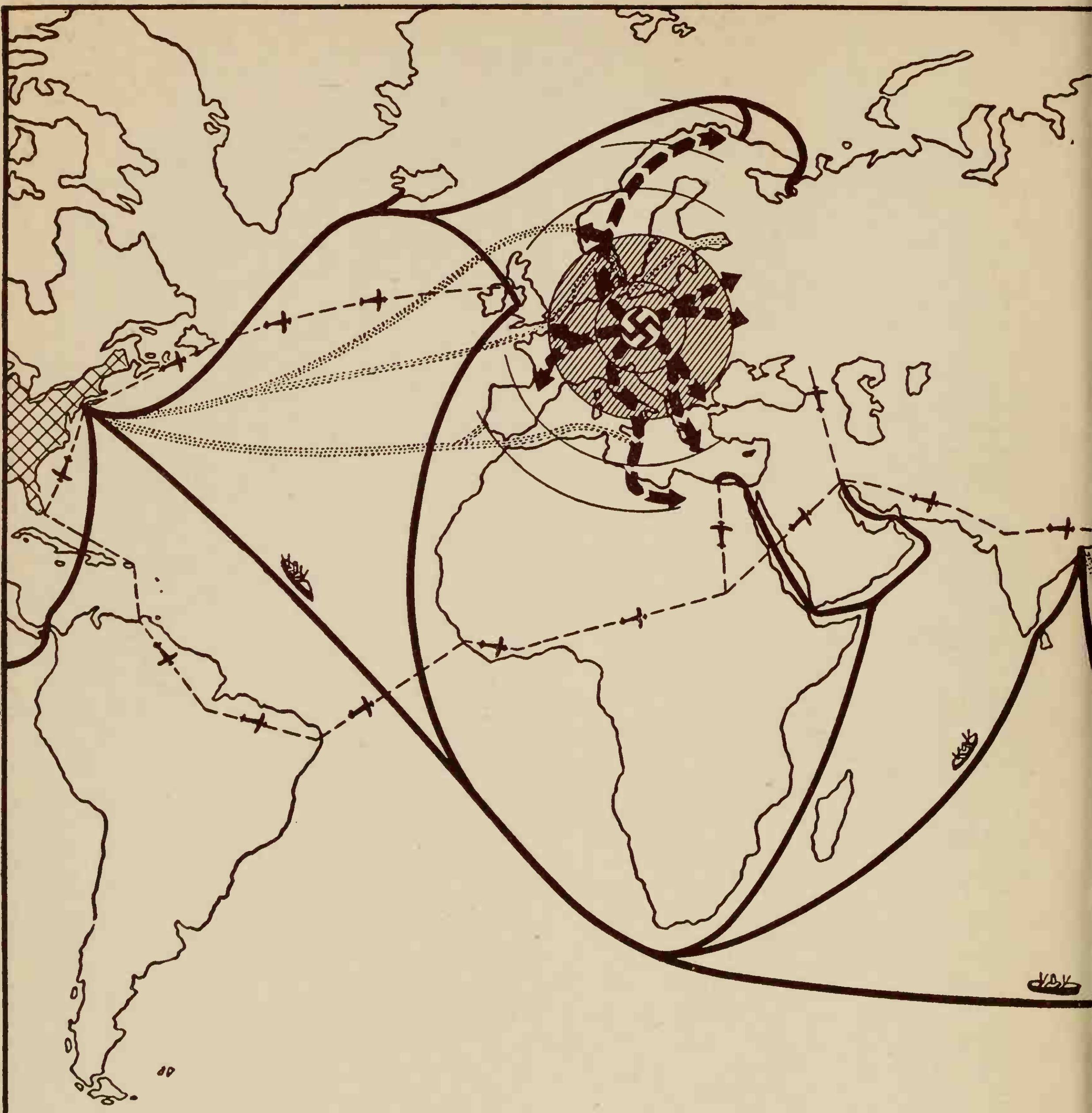
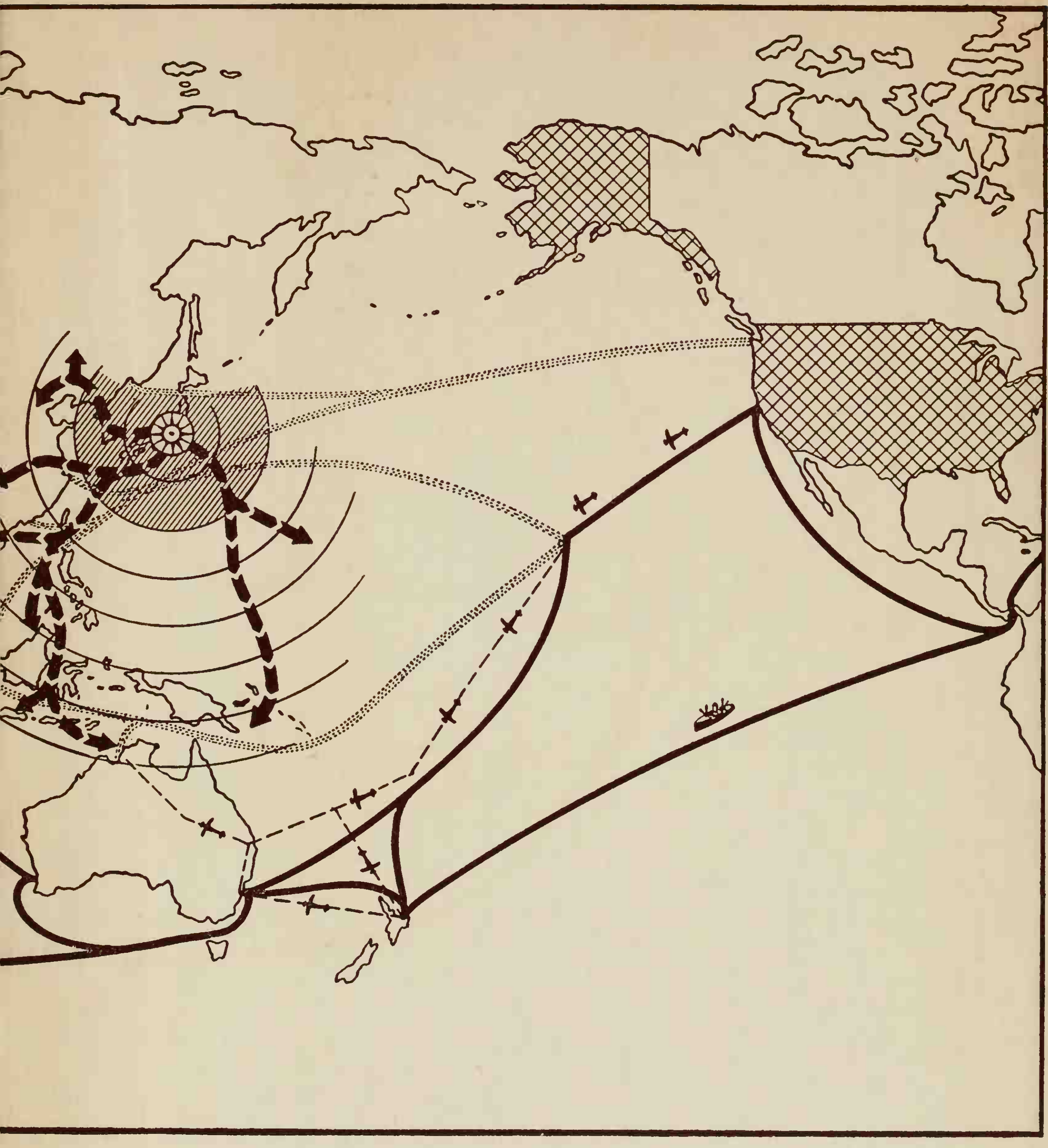


United Nations Vs. Axis:



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